



Presbytery <sup>OF</sup>  
**Greater Atlanta**

*Growing Healthy, Vital Congregations  
Equipping Healthy, Innovative Leaders*

# Commissioner Handbook

Stated Meeting

April 30, 2024  
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM

*via Zoom*

[Registration Required](#) by **noon, Monday, April 29**

## STRATEGIC PURPOSE

To be a catalyst, creator and equipper of healthy, vital and growing congregations and equip healthy, innovative leaders in all regions of the Presbytery.

## ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

1. Download and install Zoom onto your device.
  - a. Computer - go to <https://zoom.us/download>
  - b. Tablets and smartphones, install Zoom from your App Store. This version of Zoom will look different than the computer version.
2. Registering for the Meeting
  - a. Registration for the meeting is required by *noon on Monday, April 29*. This can be completed at <http://www.atlpcusa.org/statedmeetings>.
  - b. After you register, you will receive an email directly from Zoom with your unique, personal link for the meeting. Each link may be used to log in exactly one device. You will receive a reminder of the link the morning of the meeting.
  - c. If you have not received your link by 3:00pm on Monday, April 29, please contact [zoom@atlpcusa.org](mailto:zoom@atlpcusa.org) for assistance.
3. Joining the Meeting:
  - a. To join the meeting, click the link and allow Zoom to open on your device.
  - b. Choose your audio input setting; choose *computer audio* if you are unsure.
  - c. The meeting will open with pre-presbytery music at 8:50am. If you join before that time, you will be placed in the waiting room.
4. Meeting Settings:
  - a. Each link is unique to the person who registered and can be used by only one person. If you share it with someone else, they will appear under your name, and you will not be able to access the meeting.
  - b. If there are multiple voting commissioners in a household, you will need to use one device per commissioner to vote.
  - c. Please be a few minutes early and adjust your settings during this time. Double check that your video and audio are working. If you are using video, check that lighting is good and minimize background distractions if possible. We will be admitting attendees beginning at 8:50 if you want to join early to be sure you are able to connect.
  - d. Please note: **You must use the link from your computer or other smart device to participate in the meeting.** We will not be offering telephone access for this meeting.
  - e. Please keep your audio on mute. You will not be able to unmute yourself. If you have a question or comment, use the *Raise Hand* feature to let the Moderator and meeting leaders know that you would like to speak. When the Moderator calls on you, the host will unmute you when called on and resume muting after you are finished speaking.
  - f. We encourage you to have your video feed on when you are able to do so to indicate to others your participation in the meeting. If you need to step away from the meeting for a few moments, please turn your video feed off.
5. Votes will be completed using Zoom's polling feature.
6. If you have a problem during the meeting, message Miranda Segrest in the Zoom meeting or send an email to [zoom@atlpcusa.org](mailto:zoom@atlpcusa.org).

PRESBYTERY OF GREATER ATLANTA....

# We are a Matthew 25 Presbytery!



**Building  
Congregational Vitality**

**Dismantling Structural  
Racism**

**Eradicating Systemic  
Poverty**



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR UPCOMING PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

Tuesday, August 6, 2024                      9:00-12:30  
*hybrid (in-person at Radcliffe Presbyterian Church)*

Saturday, November 9, 2024                9:00-12:30  
*in-person at Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church*

Saturday, February 8, 2025

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Saturday, November 8, 2025

## OFFERING INFORMATION

Today's offering supports the three campus ministries working within our bounds: UKirk, Atlanta Oikos, and WCF at Georgia Tech.

**UKirk** seeks to energize, coordinate, and develop relationship-based ministries on Atlanta area college campuses and to build connections between college students and PC(USA) congregations. It strives to foster supportive, faithful communities of students who together seek to engage faith in their everyday lives, particularly for the students at Agnes Scott College, Emory University, and Georgia State University.



**Atlanta Oikos** has been a home away from home for international students at Emory University since 2016. Oikos engages Atlanta area international students in ministry and exists to be a Christian community that provides relational connection and spiritual development through worship, fellowship, and mission. In turn, we anticipate that our students will carry the mission and ministry of OIKOS with them when they return home to their own countries—or wherever they travel next—as they continue to live out their callings as members of the household of God.

**Westminster Christian Fellowship (WCF)** is a campus ministry that has served Georgia Tech for over 50 years. Through weekly meals, Bible study, and worship we encourage and equip current believers while sharing our faith with the rest of campus. We serve specifically domestic as well as Chinese students.

**To make a donation**, use the QR code above, visit our website at [www.atlpcusa.org](http://www.atlpcusa.org) and click on the green "Give" button found in the middle of the website.

## PASTORAL CARE CONCERNS

The Pastor-to-Pastor/Educator Team is available to minister to all clergy and educators. If you are sick or have any need to have a confidential conversation about personal matters, they will respond. Please contact any of the following people listed below. For more information about the Pastor-to-Pastor Team, visit [www.atlpcusa.org/pastortopastor](http://www.atlpcusa.org/pastortopastor).

To join email distribution of the monthly pastoral care reports, visit: [www.atlpcusa.org/newsletter](http://www.atlpcusa.org/newsletter)

[Jane Hubbard](#), Coordinator, 470-801-6003

[Brian Dauost](#) 303-475-3267

[Sally Foster](#) 770-335-5833

[Joan Gray](#) 404-403-8745

[Jerry Leath](#) 404-358-8002

[Nicole Lock](#) 678-628-4880

[Catherine Lukens](#) 404-285-4568

[Steven Son](#) 770-880-9485

[George Tatro](#) 404-784-0384

[Scott Tucker](#) 404-842-5800

[Jill Ulrici](#) 404-550-4812

[Mary Beth Walker](#) 404-545-1480

[Sylvia Wilson](#) 404-642-0255

## STAY CONNECTED

If you would like to join the email distribution list for weekly pastoral care reports, the Presbytery newsletter or to download the Handbook, please send your email /contact information to Mark Sauls at [msauls@atlpcusa.org](mailto:msauls@atlpcusa.org) and indicate which of the three publications you would like to receive. For more information, please visit our website at [www.atlpcusa.org/newsletter](http://www.atlpcusa.org/newsletter). Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @atlpcusa and use #atlpcusa to join the conversation.

## CHURCH CONFLICT PHONE CONSULTS

Are you a leader struggling to find an appropriate response to a sticky situation or challenging issue in your church? Members of the Presbytery's Shalom Team are available to provide brief (45-50 mins) conflict consultations. In most cases, they offer strategic perspective to help leaders balance both situations and relationships in the church. If you could benefit from this confidential service, please contact any of the following Shalom Team members to arrange a phone consultation:

Jody Andrade, [andradecon@mindspring.com](mailto:andradecon@mindspring.com)

Joy Fisher, [jfisher@atlpcusa.org](mailto:jfisher@atlpcusa.org)

Diane Duane, [duane.diane.l@gmail.com](mailto:duane.diane.l@gmail.com)

Julie Ferguson, [revjulieferg@gmail.com](mailto:revjulieferg@gmail.com)

Sam Kim, [sungwoo.samkim@gmail.com](mailto:sungwoo.samkim@gmail.com)

Romona Lavender, [rmlavender@bellsouth.net](mailto:rmlavender@bellsouth.net)

Karen Mason, [kmason55@gmail.com](mailto:kmason55@gmail.com)

David York, [chicdaddy@gmail.com](mailto:chicdaddy@gmail.com)

## PROPOSED DOCKET

Spring Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

April 30, 2024 | via Zoom

*Theme: Hope and Humility*

8:50	Pre-Meeting Music	
9:00	Opening Prayer Welcome by Host Pastors Call to Worship Opening Hymn	Moderator Alex Rodgers
9:15	Declaration of Quorum Zoom Orientation	Andy James
9:25	Stated Clerk's Report (p. 22-26)	Andy James
9:30	Executive Presbyter's Report (p. 27)	Aisha Brooks-Johnson
9:40	Board of Pensions (p. 28)	Clark Simmons
9:45	Prayer of Confession Assurance of Pardon Passing the Peace	
9:50	Partnership Videos	WCF at Georgia Tech
9:55	Committee on Preparation for Ministry (p. 29-31)	Emma Neishloss
10:10	Examinations Commission (p. 32-42)	Jeanne Simpson
10:30	Scripture Sermon	Romans 5:1-5 Emily Choi and David Lower
10:55	Partnership Videos	Georgia Interfaith Power and Light
11:00	Break with Music	
11:05	Council	Iris Wallace
11:15	Offering Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer	UKirk, Atlanta Oikos, and WCF at Georgia Tech
11:20	New Church Development Commission (p. 43-45)	Lindsay Armstrong
11:30	Bills & Overtures Committee: Overture to the 226th General Assembly (p. 46-53)	Juan Herrera
11:40	Commissioning of Commissioners to the 226th General Assembly	

## **PROPOSED OMNIBUS MOTION**

The following items are proposed for approval in the omnibus motion:

- Docket for the Meeting (p. 6-7)
- Minutes of the Winter Stated Meeting (February 3, 2024) ([available on the presbytery website](#))
- Admit to Record items in the Committee on Ministry Report (p. 8-12)
- Action items in the Nominating Committee Report (p. 13-15)
- Admit to Record items in the Operations Committee Report (p. 16)
- Admit to Record items in the Stated Clerk's Report (p. 22-23)
- Admit to Record items in the Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report (p. 29)

# COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

## Admit to Record:

1. The following congregations have been given permission to elect a pastor nominating committee for the indicated positions, in accordance with G-2.0801:

Druid Hills (designated pastor)  
North Avenue (pastor)

2. Transfer **Gyeong Kim** to Cayuga-Syracuse Presbytery upon their request, effective February 14, 2023.
3. Approve the interim pastor relationship between **John McCrosky**, a member of Northeast Georgia Presbytery who has been approved to labor within our bounds, and **Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church**, effective November 19, 2023, through November 18, 2024, working full time.

Cash salary	48,000
Housing allowance	24,500
SECA allowance	5,546
Board of Pensions Pastor's Participation	28,276
Continuing education and professional expenses	5,100
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

4. Conclude the contract call associate pastor relationship between **Steven Rembert** and **North Avenue Presbyterian Church**, effective November 30, 2023.
5. Renew the contract call pastor relationship between **Becky Baker** and **Gum Creek Presbyterian Church**, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, working 18 hours per week.

Housing allowance	28,662
Continuing education	1,000
Mileage/auto expenses	500
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

6. Renew the contract call associate pastor relationship between **Amanda Kemery** and **Morningside Presbyterian Church**, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, working full time.

Cash salary	36,432
Housing allowance	37,000
SECA tax allowance	5,426
Minister's Choice	7,093
Professional expenses, including continuing education	4,100
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

7. Approve the contract call pastor relationship between **Jan Tolbert** and **Ebenezer Presbyterian Church**, effective January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, working 12 hours per week.

Cash salary	20,520
Housing allowance	12,000
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	



8. Renew the contract call pastor relationship between **Joshua Woodsmith** and **Jonesboro First Presbyterian Church**, effective January 8, 2024, through January 7, 2025, working 32 hours per week.

Cash salary	19,600
Housing allowance	24,000
SECA allowance	3,366
Board of Pensions Pastor’s Participation	10,333
Continuing education	900
Professional expenses	1,000
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

9. Appoint **Charles Wiley** as moderator of session at **Crossroads Presbyterian Church**, effective January 15, 2024.
10. Dissolve the pastoral relationship between **Renée Meyer** and **Druid Hills Presbyterian Church**, effective January 19, 2024, with continuation of salary and benefits for one month, and place her on the roll of retired ministers.
11. Conclude the interim pastor relationship between **Pam Driesell** and **Kairos Presbyterian Church** and place her on the member at large roll, effective January 22, 2024.
12. Conclude the interim pastor relationship between **Gray Norsworthy** and **Northwest Presbyterian Church**, effective January 22, 2024.
13. Place **Kyounghun “Isaac” Keum** on the member at large roll following the conclusion of his service as contract call associate pastor at **Korean Community Presbyterian Church**, effective January 28, 2024.
14. Conclude the contract call associate pastor relationships between **Glenn Goldsmith** and **Irene Wong** and **North Avenue Presbyterian Church**, effective January 31, 2024.
15. Approve the interim pastor relationship between **James Simpson** and **Eastminster Presbyterian Church**, effective February 4, 2024, through February 3, 2025, working full time.

Cash salary	48,000
Housing allowance	27,000
SECA allowance	5,738
Board of Pensions Pastor’s Participation	29,250
Continuing education	1,000
Other vouchered expenses	4,100
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	
Additional time away in May and September 2024 included in the agreement	

16. Approve the contract call pastor relationship between **Sue Riggle** and **Kelley Presbyterian Church**, effective February 18, 2024, through February 17, 2025, working 32 hours per week.

Cash salary	20,000
Housing allowance	20,000
Board of Pensions Minister’s Choice	4,000
Continuing education	1,000
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

17. Appoint **Andy Acton** as moderator of session at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Decatur, effective February 28, 2024.

18. Approve the interim pastor relationship between **Nicole Lock** and **Crossroads Presbyterian Church**, effective March 4, 2024, through March 3, 2025, working full time.

Cash salary	50,000
Housing allowance	22,000
SECA allowance	5,508
Board of Pensions Pastor's Participation	28,080
Dental	905
Continuing education	1,500
Mileage/auto expenses	3,000
Professional expenses	1,500
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	

19. Conclude the interim pastor relationship between **James Simpson** and **Eastminster Presbyterian Church** and place him on the member-at-large roll, effective March 8, 2024, with full salary and benefits continuing for thirty days and benefits continuing for three additional months.

20. Conclude the contract call pastor relationship between **Young Chul Jeon** and **New Presbyterian Church of Georgia**, effective March 31, 2024, and place him on the roll of retired ministers.

21. The following ministers of the Word and Sacrament serving in a validated ministry outside the congregation have submitted their required annual report:

Ann Clay Adams	Sunghee Han
Ben Allward-Theimer	Timothy Hartman
Katie Archibald-Woodward	Trace Haythorn
Lindsay Armstrong	Jenelle Holmes
Jennifer Ayres	Christopher Hooker
Jonathan Ball	Sarah Hooker
(Dennis) Hamilton Barnes	C. Anderson James
Sarah Bogue	Robbye Jarrell
Adam Borneman	Carlton David Johnson
Myung Jin Chae	Julie Johnson
Michael Chaney	Sharon Junn
Jaewook Cho	Jane Kagia
Moongill Cho	Brigette Kemink
Irene Jiyoun Choi	Nayoung Kim
Martha Clinkscapes	Simone Kim
Will Coleman	Sam Sungwoo Kim
Joannah Cook	Neal Kuhlhorst
Nelson Donado	Sarah Vungsuanching Lane
Mark Douglas	Jae Hyeong Lee
Brittany Fiscus-van Rossum	Rafael Lemos Viana
Joy Fisher	Catherine Lukens
Anna Carter Florence	Martha Moore-Keish
Sally Foster	Jihyun Oh
Anne Fyffe	Song Yin Paik
Glenn Goldsmith	Timothy Park
(Bea Sorte) Thelma Goodrum	Rebecca Parker
Dana Gray	Sue Kim Park

Diana Rosa Ramos Garcia  
Holly Reimer  
Seung-eun Rhee  
George Rinker  
Marthame Sanders  
Ivette Sanjines Del Llano  
Sarah Smith  
Elisabeth Smith-Purcell

Katie Sundermeier  
Holly Tickle  
Blake Traynham  
Jerry Dean Weber  
Irene Wong  
Christine Yoder  
Hee-Dong Yoo

22. The following ministers of the Word and Sacrament on the member at large roll have submitted their required annual report:

Shannon Ball  
Leigh Bonner  
Rachel Breyer  
Carolyn Christie  
Jeff Davis  
Wendy Dewberry  
Julie Ferguson  
Alan Jenkins  
Laura Jernigan  
Jill Joyner

John Morgan  
Erin Noh  
Sarah Perkins  
Caitlin Phillips  
Ashley Pieper  
Meda Stamper  
Jannan Thomas  
Yolanda Thompson  
Shayne Wheeler

23. The Committee on Ministry has adopted the following Policy 10 on moderators of session.

*“The pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session of that congregation. In congregations where there are co-pastors, they shall both be considered moderators and have provisions for designating who presides at a particular meeting. If it is impractical for the pastor to moderate, he or she shall invite another minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a member of the presbytery or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator.” (G-3.0104)*

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta makes the following provisions for moderators of session:

1. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament has been approved to serve as installed pastor of a congregation, they are appointed as the moderator of session upon the effective date of the relationship, unless otherwise stated.
2. A ruling elder commissioned as Commissioned Ruling Elder may serve as moderator of session in accordance with the provisions of their commission.
3. A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a member of another presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) may moderate the session of a congregation when they have been approved to labor in the bounds of the Presbytery in an interim or contract call relationship with that congregation.
4. An installed pastor may invite another minister member of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (including those serving in that congregation) to serve as moderator without further approval. The Commission on Ministry also maintains a list of ruling elders and ministers of other presbyteries who are also authorized to moderate a session upon invitation of the installed pastor. Ruling elders on such list may not moderate the session of the congregation of which they are a member.
5. It is not appropriate for the moderator of session to pass the chair to the clerk of session or another ruling elder from that congregation without the moderator of session present. The moderator of session may choose to step out of the meeting and allow the session to discuss the

matter informally while the meeting is in recess, but the moderator must return to preside over the vote. Such a leadership role is not considered a conflict of interest. If it is anticipated that such a discussion will not be routine, the pastor should invite another approved person to moderate.

6. When there is no installed pastor, the minister of the Word and Sacrament in an interim or contract call pastor relationship with the congregation is considered the moderator of session unless the terms of such relationship specify otherwise.
7. If there is a vacancy in the pastoral relationship and there is an associate pastor continuing in service to the congregation, the associate pastor or another person may be appointed as moderator of session by the Commission on Ministry.
8. When there is no minister of the Word and Sacrament in any relationship with a congregation, or there is other cause for the Presbytery to make ongoing provision for a moderator, the Commission on Ministry names the moderator upon recommendation of the Congregational Consultant.
9. When there is no appointed moderator, or if for any reason the appointed moderator cannot serve, the following persons may serve as moderator of session for any congregation in the Presbytery without further approval:
  - a. the Executive Presbyter;
  - b. the Stated Clerk;
  - c. a Congregational Consultant;
  - d. the Executive Director of the New Church Development Commission;
  - e. a co-moderator of the Commission on Ministry; or
  - f. any ruling elder or minister of the Word and Sacrament so designated on the Commission on Ministry's list of authorized moderators.

The moderator of session under this policy is also the moderator of any meetings of the congregation not moderated by the installed pastor of the congregation (G-1.0505). Any person named in #9 above may serve as moderator of a congregational meeting if it is impractical for the moderator of session to preside or to invite another person under G-1.0505.

When a congregation is considering the session's recommendations for changes to a pastor's terms of call under G-2.0804, the pastor may remain as moderator of the congregational meeting or may temporarily invite the clerk of session to preside at the meeting to allow space for questions before the pastor returns to the chair to preside over the vote.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

### For Information:

The Nominating Committee strives to select those best able and available to perform the Presbytery's work as it also endeavors to use the available talents of as many people as possible. Presbytery committees and commissions are composed of ruling elders, teaching elders, and lay leaders who work together to support, strategize, research, plan, and make decisions that guide our presbytery in accomplishing its mission. Please think about joining God's work at the presbytery level and complete a Volunteer Interest Form (VIF) found on the last page of this Handbook or online at <https://www.atlpcusa.org/committees>. By completing the VIF, you will help the Nominating Committee learn of your interests and special gifts. You will also find a list of committees, commissions, and job descriptions at the link above. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Debbie Durden, [dfdurden@gmail.com](mailto:dfdurden@gmail.com); Emily Wilmesherr, [ewilmesherr@dpchurch.org](mailto:ewilmesherr@dpchurch.org); or Joy Fisher, [jfisher@atlpcusa.org](mailto:jfisher@atlpcusa.org).

**For Action:** (all names in **bold** are those that are being nominated)

### Committee on Representation

#### Class of 2024

1. Samuel Mwaniki (2022)	TE	North Avenue	Racial/Ethnic
<b>2. Joshua Woodsmith (2024)</b>	<b>TE</b>	<b>Jonesboro First</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>

#### Class of 2025

1. Sue Kim Park (2021)	TE	Validated	Racial/Ethnic
2. Gay Alston (2023)	LP	New Life	Racial/Ethnic

#### Class of 2026

1. Jane Kagia (2024)	TE	Validated	Racial/Ethnic
2. Dorothy Lott (2024)	RE	Hillside	Racial/Ethnic

### Examinations Commission

#### Class of 2024

1. Joe Floyd (2019)	RE	Morningside	Racial/Ethnic
2. Cheryl Hartman (2019)	RE	Good Shepherd	Caucasian
3. Laticia Ray-Alston (2022)	RE	Pleasant Hill	Racial/Ethnic
4. Destiny Williams (2022)	RE	McDonough	Caucasian
5. Tom Whitworth (2022)	RE	Bremen First	Caucasian

#### Class of 2025

1. Martha Moore-Keish (2020)	TE	Validated	Caucasian
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2. Jeanne Simpson	(2020)	TE	Philadelphia	Caucasian
3. Laura Neely	(2023)	TE	LaGrange First	Caucasian
4. Prue Swerlick	(2023)	RE	Shallowford	Caucasian
5. David York	(2021)	RE	Central	Caucasian

Class of 2026

1. Neeley Lane	(2021)	TE	Covington First	Caucasian
2. Sam Phillips	(2024)	TE	Validated	Caucasian
3. Jim Simpson	(2024)	TE	At Large	Caucasian
4. Cecelya Taylor	(2024)	TE	Northminster	Racial/Ethnic
<b>5. Rosalind McIntyre (2024)</b>		<b>RE</b>	<b>Hillside</b>	<b>Black</b>

**Operations Committee**

Class of 2024

1. Jerry Leath	(2019)	RE	Church of the Master	Racial/Ethnic
2. Catherine Foster	(2021)	TE	Validated	Caucasian
3. Paul Kwak	(2022)	RE	Korean Community	Racial/Ethnic
4. Todd Speed	(2022)	TE	Decatur	Caucasian
5. Cy Wolverton	(2022)	RE	Covington First	Caucasian
6. Esther Stokes	(2022)	RE	Trinity Atlanta	Caucasian

Class of 2025

1. Frans Christ	(2020)	RE	North Avenue	Caucasian
2. Chris Hooker	(2020)	TE	Validated	Caucasian
3. Alice Moore	(2020)	RE	Hillside	Racial/Ethnic
4. Ginger Jeffries	(2023)	RE	AtlantaFirst	Caucasian
5. Chris Keyser	(2023)	RE	Pleasant Hill	Caucasian
6. Mary Martin	(2023)	RE	Saint Luke's	Caucasian

Class of 2026

1. Iris Wallace	(2021)	RE	Radcliffe	Racial/Ethnic
2. Barrett Abernethy	(2024)	TE	Mount Vernon	Caucasian
3. Juan Herrera	(2024)	TE	Hamilton Mill	Racial/Ethnic
4. Irene Wong	(2024)	TE	Validated	Racial/Ethnic
<b>5. Shannon Ball (2024)</b>		<b>TE</b>	<b>At Large</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>
<b>6. Sue Lee (2024)</b>		<b>RE</b>	<b>Korean Central</b>	<b>Asian</b>

**Worship Committee**

Class of 2024

1. Shirley Davis	(2022)	RE	Trinity Decatur	African-American
2. Brittany Fiscus-van Rossum	(2022)	TE	Validated	Caucasian
3. Drew Wilmesherr	(2022)	TE	Validated	Caucasian

Class of 2025

1. Andy Acton	(2020)	TE	Emory	Caucasian
2. Becky Loftis	(2021)	RE	Saint Luke's	Caucasian
<b>3. Holly Reimer</b>	<b>(2024)</b>	<b>TE</b>	<b>Validated</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>

Class of 2026

1. Charlton Allen	(2021)	RE	St. Andrews	Caucasian
2. Jennie Sankey	(2024)	TE	Pleasant Hill	Caucasian
<b>3. Jasmine Evans</b>	<b>(2024)</b>	<b>TE</b>	<b>North Avenue</b>	<b>Black</b>

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Admit to Record:**

1. On February 7, 2024, the Operations Committee, acting as the Board of Directors, approved the sale of the former Georgia Avenue Presbyterian Church, located at 645 Grant St SE, to Georgia Avenue Church.
2. On April 8, 2024, the Operations Committee, acting as the Board of Directors, elected the following officers for 2024:
  - a. As required by the Bylaws of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Inc.:  
Chairman of the Board of Directors – Jerry Leath  
Corporate Secretary – Rev. C. Anderson James, Stated Clerk  
Recording Secretary – Rev. Chris Hooker  
Treasurer – Andrew B. Hill, Director of Finance and Property
  - b. As required by the Georgia Secretary of State:  
Chief Executive Officer – Rev. Aisha Brooks-Johnson, Executive Presbyter  
Secretary – Rev. C. Anderson James, Stated Clerk  
Chief Financial Officer – Andrew B. Hill, Director of Finance and Property  
Registered Agent – Andrew B. Hill, Director of Finance and Property

### **For Information:**

The financial reports for the current fiscal year through February 29, 2024, directly follow this report.



**THE PRESBYTERY OF GREATER ATLANTA**  
**2024 BENEVOLENCE GIVING RECORDS**  
**3/31/2024**

CHURCH	COLUMN 1 OPERATIONAL SUPPORT PLEDGE	COLUMN 2 OPERATIONAL SUPPORT RECEIVED	COLUMN 3 PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT \$28.80	COLUMN 4 PER CAPITA RECEIVED	COLUMN 5 TOTAL RECEIPTS TO PRESBYTERY BUDGET <small>(Column 2 + Column 4)</small>	COLUMN 6 SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS	COLUMN 7 NON-BUDGETED DESIGNATIONS	COLUMN 8 TOTAL OF ALL RECEIPTS <small>(Column 5+Columns 6 &amp; 7)</small>	MEMBERSHIP 12/31/2023	MEMBERSHIP 12/31/2022
PEACHTREE			\$213,004.80		\$0.00			\$0.00	7535	7396
ROSWELL		\$5,000.00	\$69,552.00		\$5,000.00			\$5,000.00	2287	2415
First PRES-ATLANTA			\$50,544.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	1787	1755
TRINITY ATLANTA			\$46,022.40		\$0.00	\$716.00	\$505.00	\$1,221.00	1624	1598
KOREAN COMMUNITY		\$30,000.00	\$40,982.40		\$30,000.00			\$30,000.00	1516	1423
SHALLOWFORD	\$3,100.40	\$516.67	\$27,849.60	\$4,641.66	\$5,158.33			\$5,158.33	983	967
ALPHARETTA			\$21,571.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	781	749
DECATUR			\$20,937.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	705	727
ST LUKES	\$33,000.00		\$20,217.60	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$1,521.41		\$11,521.41	698	702
NORTH AVENUE		\$5,003.01	\$20,160.00		\$5,003.01	\$1,250.01		\$6,253.02	694	700
CENTRAL			\$14,025.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	481	487
MCDONOUGH		\$1,681.00	\$13,363.20	\$10,093.00	\$11,774.00	\$712.50		\$12,486.50	356	464
First PRES-LAGRANGE			\$13,132.80		\$0.00			\$0.00	460	456
MORNINGSIDE			\$11,577.60		\$0.00	\$1,195.00		\$1,195.00	400	402
NEWNAN	\$0.00		\$11,577.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	252	402
BUFORD			\$11,232.00	\$2,058.00	\$2,058.00		\$266.51	\$2,324.51	389	390
MOUNT VERNON			\$11,030.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	381	383
First AFRICAN			\$10,368.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	358	360
NORTH DECATUR	\$22,000.00		\$10,022.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	370	348
OAKHURST			\$9,561.60		\$0.00	\$349.41	\$698.82	\$1,048.23	336	332
JOHNS CREEK			\$9,273.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	316	322
PLEASANT HILL			\$8,985.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	278	312
NORTHMINSTER			\$8,611.20	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00			\$8,500.00	294	299
NEW LIFE			\$8,582.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	299	298
WESTMINSTER			\$8,352.00		\$0.00	\$601.00		\$601.00	248	290
FAYETTE			\$7,430.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	250	258
CLAIRMONT			\$7,056.00	\$1,720.05	\$1,720.05			\$1,720.05	248	245
EASTMINSTER			\$6,883.20	\$1,376.64	\$1,376.64			\$1,376.64	243	239
GOOD SHEPHERD	\$0.00		\$6,393.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	215	222
First PRES-PEACHTREE CITY			\$5,587.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	192	194
ST ANDREWS			\$5,558.40		\$0.00	\$154.40	\$77.20	\$231.60	187	193
RADCLIFFE	\$1,750.00		\$5,529.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	188	192
NORTHWEST	\$9,500.00		\$5,472.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	192	190
COVINGTON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN	\$10,000.00	\$1,666.66	\$5,472.00	\$912.00	\$2,578.66			\$2,578.66	189	190
CONYERS			\$5,385.60		\$0.00	\$140.00		\$140.00	81	187
KOREAN CENTRAL			\$5,328.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	195	185
MORROW			\$5,299.20	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00			\$2,000.00	176	184
LAWRENCEVILLE	\$2,500.00		\$4,867.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	150	169
COVENANT	\$4,000.00	\$666.67	\$4,809.60	\$812.67	\$1,479.34			\$1,479.34	171	167
LOYD	\$0.00		\$4,752.00	\$4,752.00	\$4,752.00			\$4,752.00	164	165
CARROLLTON			\$4,636.80		\$0.00	\$100.00		\$100.00	156	161
CROSSROADS	\$1,250.00		\$4,406.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	163	153
KAIROS			\$3,686.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	128	128
STOCKBRIDGE	\$1,313.00		\$3,686.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	115	128
DRUID HILLS			\$3,456.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	120	120
HILLSIDE			\$3,369.60		\$0.00	\$3,365.15	\$562.00	\$3,927.15	118	117
HAMILTON MILL	\$5,000.00	\$416.67	\$3,196.80	\$266.40	\$683.07			\$683.07	109	111
CHURCH OF THE MASTER			\$2,880.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	66	100
OGLETHORPE	\$2,900.00		\$2,822.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	89	98
AUSTELL	\$0.00		\$2,736.00		\$0.00	\$390.86	\$45.00	\$435.86	94	95
RICE MEMORIAL			\$2,649.60		\$0.00	\$90.00		\$90.00	59	92
FAIRVIEW			\$2,448.00	\$612.00	\$612.00	\$60.00		\$672.00	84	85
SMYRNA			\$2,361.60	\$2,361.60	\$2,361.60			\$2,361.60	74	82
First PRES-MONROE			\$2,304.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	86	80
GOOD NEWS GARDEN			\$2,275.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	80	79
BETHANY			\$2,246.40	\$561.60	\$561.60			\$561.60	81	78
PHILADELPHIA			\$2,246.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	78	78
First PRES-JONESBORO	\$5,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,073.60	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$584.50		\$2,584.50	74	72
GUM CREEK			\$2,016.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	61	70
TRINITY DECATUR			\$1,929.60		\$0.00	\$91.50		\$91.50	60	67
NORCROSS	\$0.00		\$1,900.80		\$0.00	\$266.00		\$266.00	65	66
TIMBERRIDGE	\$0.00		\$1,900.80		\$0.00			\$0.00	62	66
PRESBY CHURCH OF THE RESURRECT'N			\$1,785.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	59	62
ATLANTA TAIWANESE			\$1,699.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	56	59
COLUMBIA			\$1,641.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	65	57
EMORY			\$1,612.80		\$0.00			\$0.00	50	56
JACKSON	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,555.20	\$1,555.20	\$3,555.20			\$3,555.20	58	54
CRISTO PARA TODAS LAS NACIONES			\$1,440.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	50	50

**THE PRESBYTERY OF GREATER ATLANTA  
2024 BENEVOLENCE GIVING RECORDS  
3/31/2024**

CHURCH	COLUMN 1 OPERATIONAL SUPPORT PLEDGE	COLUMN 2 OPERATIONAL SUPPORT RECEIVED	COLUMN 3 PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT \$28.80	COLUMN 4 PER CAPITA RECEIVED	COLUMN 5 TOTAL RECEIPTS TO PRESBYTERY BUDGET <small>(Column 2 + Column 4)</small>	COLUMN 6 SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS	COLUMN 7 NON-BUDGETED DESIGNATIONS	COLUMN 8 TOTAL OF ALL RECEIPTS <small>(Column 5+Columns 6 &amp; 7)</small>	MEMBERSHIP 12/31/2023	MEMBERSHIP 12/31/2022
HANBIT			\$1,440.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	48	50
GRACE KOREAN	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$1,296.00	\$1,382.40	\$1,682.40			\$1,682.40	48	45
KELLEY			\$1,209.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	33	42
EL NAZERENO			\$1,008.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	35	35
HEMPHILL MEMORIAL			\$950.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	17	33
FRIENDSHIP			\$691.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	24	24
BARNESVILLE			\$633.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	22	22
DALLAS-DODD			\$633.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	22	22
EBENEZER	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$547.20	\$547.20	\$1,547.20			\$1,547.20	22	19
GREENVILLE			\$518.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	18	18
NEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GA.			\$518.40		\$0.00			\$0.00	18	18
WESTHILLS			\$489.60		\$0.00			\$0.00	16	17
First PRES-BREMEN			\$403.20	\$403.20	\$403.20			\$403.20	14	14
First PRES-MANCHESTER WM SPRGS.			\$403.20		\$0.00			\$0.00	13	14
FELLOWSHIP			\$172.80		\$0.00			\$0.00	6	6
TALLAPOOSA			\$144.00		\$0.00			\$0.00	5	5
BENEVOLENCE TOTAL	\$104,613.40	\$49,250.68	\$858,384.00	\$55,555.62	\$104,806.30	\$11,587.74	\$2,154.53	\$118,548.57	29390	29805
INDIVIDUAL GIVING TOTAL				\$73.67				\$3,703.00		
* OVERALL TOTAL		\$49,250.68		\$55,629.29				\$122,251.57		

- COLUMN (1)** Benevolence Pledges from church sessions.
- COLUMN (2)** All funds for basic benevolence support of GA, Synod & Presbytery Missions. Not included here are special designations, which are reported in Column 5.
- COLUMN (3)** Per Capita due by April 1, 2024 is \$28.80 per member based on the active membership of the congregation as of January 1, 2023 as reported in the Assembly statistics for Dec. 31, 2022.
- COLUMN (4)** Per Capita received at Presbytery.
- COLUMN (5)** Total Receipts to Presbytery Budget.
- COLUMN (6)** Designated amounts that support the budgeted work of the governing bodies and institutions of the church.
- COLUMN (7)** Designated amounts that support non-budgeted work of institutions of the church, such as E.C.O.'s , Disaster Relief & Capital Funds Campaign, etc.
- COLUMN (8)** Total of all receipts.

**MEMBERSHIP** - Shown for 12/31/23; per capita based on 12/31/22 membership.

If there is an error, please send a written request for correction to Gwen Hairston, Financial Support Specialist, at the Presbytery Office via email at ghairston@atlpcusa.org  
Your written request will expedite our ability to respond. If you have any questions, contact Gwen Hairston at 404-898-0711, ext 125.

**Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Inc.**  
**Monthly Benevolence Report**  
**March 2024**

**Note: The Report Option to include Open Transactions is selected.**

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Actual (Last Year)
<b>Revenues</b>			
<b>Support and Revenue</b>			
<b>Budgeted Designated</b>			
<b>Budgeted General Assembly</b>			
100-403000 - One Great Hour of Sharing	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$849.51
100-403020 - Christmas Joy Offering	\$3,422.15	\$6,141.06	\$6,676.33
100-403030 - Pentecost Offering	\$615.00	\$953.00	\$383.00
100-403050 - Peacemaking Special Offering	\$1,214.00	\$2,231.56	\$228.56
100-403200 - Designated for Missionaries	\$416.67	\$1,250.01	\$2,750.01
<b>Total Budgeted General Assembly</b>	<u>\$5,667.82</u>	<u>\$10,575.63</u>	<u>\$10,887.41</u>
<b>Budgeted Presbytery</b>			
100-403510 - Designated Thornwell Home & School	\$846.50	\$978.50	\$2,012.50
100-403520 - Columbia Seminary	\$300.86	\$300.86	\$645.94
100-403580 - Presbyterian Homes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
<b>Total Budgeted Presbytery</b>	<u>\$1,147.36</u>	<u>\$1,279.36</u>	<u>\$2,858.44</u>
<b>Total Budgeted Designated</b>	<u>\$6,815.18</u>	<u>\$11,854.99</u>	<u>\$13,745.85</u>
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<u>\$6,815.18</u>	<u>\$11,854.99</u>	<u>\$13,745.85</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<u>\$6,815.18</u>	<u>\$11,854.99</u>	<u>\$13,745.85</u>
<b>Disbursements and Expenses</b>			
<b>Benevolent Disbursements</b>			
100-500100 - G. A. Budgeted Benevolence	\$5,667.82	\$10,575.63	\$10,887.41
100-500500 - Designated for Presbyterian Homes	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
100-504030 - Designated for Thornwell	\$846.50	\$978.50	\$2,012.50
100-506010 - Designated for Columbia Seminary	\$300.86	\$300.86	\$645.94
<b>Total Benevolent Disbursements</b>	<u>\$6,815.18</u>	<u>\$11,854.99</u>	<u>\$13,745.85</u>
<b>Total Disbursements and Expenses</b>	<u>\$6,815.18</u>	<u>\$11,854.99</u>	<u>\$13,745.85</u>
<b>Net Total</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Inc.  
Preliminary Statement of Financial Position  
Operations Fund  
As of March 31, 2024

**Assets**

Cash		<b>\$77,039.42</b>
Investments		<b>\$381,252.25</b>
Accounts Receivable		
Allowance for Accounts Receivable	(\$44,621.30)	
A/R--Operations	\$0.00	
A/R-Due from Clifton Sanctuary Min.	\$0.00	
A/R Memorial Drive PC	\$35,001.25	
A/R - Atlanta Korean	(\$44,742.97)	
A/R- Ormewood Park	\$42,495.24	
A/R - Church of the New Covenant	(\$17,693.54)	
A/R - Luther Hays PET	\$20.10	
A/R-Georgia Avenue Building/Site	\$150,888.13	
A/R -Church os St. Andrew	\$30,996.82	
Total Accounts Receivable		<b>\$152,343.73</b>
Pledges Receivable (Ground Lease)	\$675,000.00	
Discount on Pledges Receivable (Ground Lease)	<u>(\$444,069.41)</u>	
Total Pledges Receivable		<b>\$230,930.59</b>
Prepaid Expenses		\$4,178.82
Property & Equipment		\$1,206,801.83
Land, Buildings and Property (Net)		\$8,608,207.39
Total Accumulated Depreciation		<u>(\$1,703,256.45)</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b><u><u>\$8,957,497.58</u></u></b>

**Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds**

Liabilities		
Presbytery Meeting Offering		\$3,229.88
A/P Operations		(\$79.02)
A/P - Insurance W/H		(\$7.69)
HFSA		\$1,393.10
Accrued Vacation		\$11,492.81
Lease Liabilities		\$13,735.20
GA Ave. Bldg Agency Funds		\$2,098.95
 Total Liabilities		 \$31,863.23
 Total Restricted Funds		 \$684,886.74
Fund Principal		
Fund Balance-Operations	\$8,357,009.37	
Net Income Year-to-Date	(\$116,261.76)	
Total Fund Principal and Net Income Year-to-Date		<u>\$8,240,747.61</u>
<b>Total Liabilities, Fund Principal, &amp; Restricted Funds</b>		<b><u><u>\$8,957,497.58</u></u></b>

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta  
 Operations Fund Revenues and Disbursements-Preliminary  
 Period Ending March 31, 2023

	Actual Period Ending <u>3/31/2024</u>	Actual Period Ending <u>3/31/2023</u>	Annual Budget <u>FYE 01/31/2025</u>
Operation Support	\$ 44,247.67	\$ 36,288.67	\$ 350,000.00
Per Capita	\$ 53,909.24	\$ 131,579.89	\$ 562,640.00
Budgeted Designated	\$ 10,575.63	\$ 10,887.41	
Budgeted Presbytery	\$ 1,279.36	\$ 3,158.44	\$ 3,000.00
Total Designated	<u>\$ 110,011.90</u>	<u>\$ 181,914.41</u>	<u>\$ 915,640.00</u>
Interest Income	\$ 521.89	\$ 342.41	\$ 10,000.00
Unrealized Gain (Loss) - Ops	\$ -		
Realized(Gain) & Loss-Ops	\$ -		\$ 15,000.00
Designated for Presbytery Only	\$ 6,723.06	\$ 6,873.67	\$ 46,500.00
Interest-Presbyterian Foundation	\$ -	\$ 97,979.20	
Other Income	\$ 3,937.61		\$ 586,512.92
Total Revenues before Transfers	<u>\$ 121,194.46</u>	<u>\$ 287,109.69</u>	<u>\$ 1,573,652.92</u>
Transfers			
New Church Development	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Peacemaking	\$ -	\$ -	
Transfer to Other Funds	\$ 3.62		\$ -
Transfer from Other Funds	\$ -		\$ -
Total Transfers	<u>\$ 3.62</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Benevolent Disbursements	\$ 77,796.04	\$ 115,782.56	\$ 496,908.06
Program Expenses			
Committees & Partnerships	\$ 5,213.00	\$ 790.00	\$ 11,150.00
Salary and Benefits	\$ 133,445.28	\$ 158,920.92	\$ 888,119.09
Administrative Costs	\$ 20,998.28	\$ 24,447.99	\$ 177,475.77
Total Program Expenses	<u>\$ 159,656.56</u>	<u>\$ 184,158.91</u>	<u>\$ 1,076,744.86</u>
Total Transfers and Disbursements	<u>\$ 237,452.60</u>	<u>\$ 299,941.47</u>	<u>\$ 1,573,652.92</u>
Change in Net Assets	<u>\$ (116,261.76)</u>	<u>\$ (12,831.78)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Other Revenues	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (3.67)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Other Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Net Operating Total	\$ (116,261.76)	\$ (12,835.45)	\$ -

# STATED CLERK'S REPORT

## For Information:

1. Thank you to the clerks of session and countless other leaders in our congregations who worked on annual statistical reports for 2023. Seventy-eight of our 85 congregations submitted some portion of their annual statistics. The Presbytery's summary report and the number of members and average worship attendees reported by each congregation are attached to this report.
2. Three opportunities remain to complete the required annual review of session records:

**Thursday, May 2, 6:30pm**, at Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church

**Saturday, May 18, 10:00am**, at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church

**Tuesday, June 4, 1:00pm**, at the Presbytery Office

Thanks to Korean Central Presbyterian Church, Stockbridge Presbyterian Church, and the C. Benton Kline, Jr., Archives at Columbia Theological Seminary for hosting our earlier sessions. Clerks of session who have not already done so should register for their preferred review session at [www.atlpcusa.org/clerks-corner](http://www.atlpcusa.org/clerks-corner). Reports of all these reviews will be published for the Summer Stated Meeting.

3. The offering from the Winter Stated Meeting of the Presbytery to support Mercy Community Church totaled \$2,538.59.
4. The Presbyteries' Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates has informed the Presbytery that they selected Rev. **Erin Noh** as a reader for Korean-language ordination exams during the Fall 2023 and Winter 2024 ordination exam administration periods.

## Admit to Record:

1. That the minutes of the commission to ordain **Kevin Lacson** as minister of the Word and Sacrament be admitted to the record.
2. That the minutes of the commission to ordain **Donghyun Jeong** as minister of the Word and Sacrament be admitted to the record.
3. The following people were appointed to serve on the commission to install **Ming Chen (Grace) Lo Rohrer** as pastor at **Atlanta Taiwanese Presbyterian Church** on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at 2:00 P.M. at Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church:

Rev. Alex Rodgers, Timberridge (moderator)

Elder Sherri Bozardt, Northminster

Rev. Katie Day, Pleasant Hill

Elder David Hill, Mt. Vernon

Rev. Sam Kim, Oikos New Worshiping Community

Rev. Jennie Sankey, Pleasant Hill

Elder Iris Wallace, Radcliffe

Elder Ken Whitehurst, Trinity Decatur/Westhills

The following people were approved as guests of the commission:

Rev. Dr. Jackie Smallbones, Reformed Church of America

Rev. Ralph Su, Presbyterian Mission Agency

4. That the minutes of the commission to install **Ming Chen (Grace) Lo Rohrer** as pastor at **Atlanta Taiwanese Presbyterian Church** be admitted to the record.

5. The following people were appointed to serve on the commission to install **Claude George Tatro III** as pastor at **Johns Creek Presbyterian Church** on Sunday, April 7, 2024, at 3:00 P.M.:

Rev. David Jones, Newnan (moderator)  
Elder Marva Bryan, Eastminster  
Elder Tim Engelbracht, McDonough  
Elder Jane Hubbard, North Avenue  
Rev. Gad Mpoyo, Shalom International Ministries  
Rev. Rafael Viana, Casa Brasil

6. That the minutes of the commission to install **Claude George Tatro III** as pastor at **Johns Creek Presbyterian Church** be admitted to the record.

7. The following people were appointed to serve on the commission to install **Lyndsay Slocum** as pastor at **Kairos Presbyterian Church** on Thursday, April 18, 2024, at 6:30 P.M.:

Rev. Jasmine Evans, North Avenue (moderator)  
Elder Clarke Coole, Kairos  
Elder Lori Howell, Roswell  
Rev. Jeff Meyers, Roswell  
Rev. Mary Beth Walker, validated ministry

The following people were approved as guests of the commission:

Rev. Beth Daniel, Mission Presbytery  
Rev. Thomas Daniel, Mission Presbytery  
Rev. Drew Ditzel, Shenandoah Presbytery  
Rev. Sharol Hayner, John Knox Presbytery

8. The following people were appointed to serve on the commission to install **Alex Moses** as pastor at **Northwest Presbyterian Church** on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 3:00 P.M.:

Elder Mark Roberson, Roswell (moderator)  
Elder Charlie Gray, Mt. Vernon  
Elder Cheryl Hartman, Good Shepherd  
Rev. Alex Rodgers, Timberridge  
Rev. Cecelya Taylor, Northminster  
Rev. Sylvia Wilson, Hillside

The following people were approved as guests of the commission:

Rev. Joy Fisher, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

9. The following people were appointed to serve on the commission to ordain **Allison Arsenault** as a minister of the Word and Sacrament in a service at **North Decatur Presbyterian Church** on Saturday, June 15, 2024, at 3:00 P.M.:

Rev. Barry Gaeddert, Atlanta First (moderator)  
Rev. Rachel Grace Breyer, member at large  
Rev. David Lewicki, North Decatur  
Elder Dawn Melin, Johns Creek  
Elder David Wilkes, North Decatur

The following people were approved as guests of the commission:

Rev. Lisa Garvin, United Methodist Church  
Rev. Jackie Hannon, New Covenant Presbytery  
Rev. Darlene Hutton, African Methodist Episcopal Church  
Christina Repoley, Forum for Theological Exploration

## 2023 Presbytery Statistical Report

### Presbytery

Greater Atlanta

### Address

1024 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Atlanta, GA 30306-4216

### Phone

404-898-0711

### Fax

404-898-0679

### Email

[office@atlpcusa.org](mailto:office@atlpcusa.org)

### Web Site

[www.atlpcusa.org](http://www.atlpcusa.org)



### Membership

Prior Active Members	29793	Adjusted membership	29679
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### Gains

Certificate	514
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Youth Professions	241
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Professions & Reaffirmations	454
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<b>Total Gains</b>	<b>1209</b>
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<b>Total Ending Active Members</b>	<b>29390</b>
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### Losses

Certificate	275
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Deaths	367
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Deleted for any Other Reason	856
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<b>Total Losses</b>	<b>1498</b>
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### Baptisms

Presented by Others	271
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At Confirmation	45
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All Other	21
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Average Weekly Worship Attendance	11615
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Friends of the Congregation	5165
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Ruling Elders on Session	835
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Do you have Deacons? Yes / No	30 / 46
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### Age Distribution of Active Members

17 & Under	1597
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18 - 25	2649
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26 - 40	4603
---------	------

41 - 55	5412
---------	------

56 - 70	6531
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Over 70	6816
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<b>Total Age Distribution</b>	<b>27608</b>
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### People with Disabilities

Hearing impairment	604
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Sight impairment	224
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Mobility impairment	526
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Other impairment	510
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### Gender Distribution

Women	15748
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Men	12050
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Non-Binary	28
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### Youth in Congregation

Age 4 and under	2158
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Elementary School (K-5th grade)	4131
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Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	2493
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High School (9th – 12th grade)	2903
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<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>11685</b>
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### Racial Ethnic

Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	2165
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Black/African American/African	2037
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Middle Eastern/North African	69
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Hispanic/Latino-a	281
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Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	13
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White	20144
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Multiracial	99
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<b>Total Racial Ethnic</b>	<b>24808</b>
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<b>Budgeted Income</b>	<b>67,812,040</b>
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<b>Budgeted Expense</b>	<b>69,631,882</b>
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### Receipts

Regular Contributions	63,089,571
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Capital Building Fund	26,282,149
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Investment Income	4,400,062
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Bequests	1,453,370
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Other Income	5,647,465
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Subsidy or Aid	35,214
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### Expenditures

Local Program	62,518,795
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Local Mission	3,702,504
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Capital Expenditures	28,095,372
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Investment Expenditures	1,475,196
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Per Capital Apprt	1,717,810
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Other Mission	2,219,341
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## 2023 Membership and Worship Attendance

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>2023 Membership</b>	<b>Worship Attendance</b>
Alpharetta	Alpharetta	781	204
Atlanta First	Atlanta	1787	840
Atlanta Taiwanese	Duluth	56	50
Austell	Austell	94	50
Barnesville	Barnesville	22	no report
Bethany	Covington	81	45
Bremen First	Bremen	14	9
Buford	Sugar Hill	389	174
Carrollton	Carrollton	156	60
Central	Atlanta	481	333
Christ for All Nations	Tucker	50	no report
Church of the Master	Atlanta	66	17
Clairmont	Decatur	248	119
Columbia	Decatur	65	45
Conyers	Conyers	81	55
Covenant	Atlanta	171	61
Covington First	Covington	189	104
Crossroads	Stone Mountain	163	130
Dallas-Dodd	LaGrange	22	22
Decatur	Decatur	705	282
Druid Hills	Atlanta	120	49
Eastminster	Stone Mountain	243	90
Ebenezer	Hogansville	22	21
Ebenezer Brazilian	Roswell		no report
El Nazareno	Hapeville	35	no report
Emory	Atlanta	50	35
Fairview	Lawrenceville	84	43
Fayette	Fayetteville	250	73
Fellowship	Jackson	6	no report
First	Jonesboro	74	35
First Afrikan	Stonecrest	358	77
Friendship	Concord	24	16
Good News Garden	Norcross	80	45
Good Shepherd	Lilburn	215	116
Grace Korean	Roswell	48	44
Greenville	Greenville	18	no report
Gum Creek	Oxford	61	30
Hamilton Mill	Hoschton	109	38
Hanbit	Johns Creek	48	no report
Hemphill Memorial	Stockbridge	17	15
Hillside	Decatur	118	38
Jackson	Jackson	58	55
Johns Creek	Johns Creek	316	102
Kairos	Atlanta	128	no report

## 2023 Membership and Worship Attendance

<b>Congregation</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>2023 Membership</b>	<b>Worship Attendance</b>
Kelley	McDonough	33	22
Korean Central	Atlanta	195	180
Korean Community	Duluth	1516	1895
LaGrange First	LaGrange	460	230
Lawrenceville	Lawrenceville	150	77
Loyd	LaGrange	164	59
Manchester/Wrm Sprgs 1st	Warm Springs	13	12
McDonough	McDonough	356	180
Monroe First	Monroe	86	70
Morningside	Atlanta	400	155
Morrow	Morrow	176	68
Mount Vernon	Sandy Springs	381	127
New Life	College Park	299	282
New PC of Georgia	Hampton	18	14
Newnan	Newnan	252	104
Norcross	Norcross	65	26
North Avenue	Atlanta	694	261
North Decatur	Decatur	370	207
Northminster	Roswell	294	100
Northwest	Atlanta	192	83
Oakhurst	Decatur	336	86
Oglethorpe	Atlanta	89	35
PC of the Resurrection	Conyers	59	33
Peachtree	Atlanta	7535	1371
Peachtree City First	Peachtree City	192	140
Philadelphia	Morrow	78	32
Pleasant Hill	Duluth	278	165
Radcliffe	Atlanta	188	200
Rice Memorial	Atlanta	59	27
Roswell	Roswell	2287	586
Saint Lukes	Dunwoody	698	218
Shallowford	Atlanta	983	245
Smyrna	Conyers	74	30
St Andrews	Tucker	187	not reported
Stockbridge	Stockbridge	115	39
Tallapoosa	Tallapoosa	5	no report
Timberridge	McDonough	62	35
Trinity	Atlanta	1624	512
Trinity	Decatur	60	no report
Westhills	Atlanta	16	15
Westminster	Snellville	248	172



## EXECUTIVE PRESBYTER'S REPORT

Aisha Brooks-Johnson

### *Windstorm, Pine Beetles, Fires and a story of Humility and Hope...*

In the opening of *Turning Ourselves Inside Out*, authors Daye and Fennell give a great illustration that frames life with a view of hope in the midst of loss. They tell the story of three calamities that happened in a Colorado forest. The first calamity was a 1997 windstorm that destroyed a forest of pine trees. The second calamity that followed was an infestation of pine beetles that infiltrated the dead pine from the windstorm and another section of the forest. The third calamity was a forest fire that left destruction, desolation, and ash.

*Windstorm. Pine beetles. Fire. Ash.* It sounds like a sad story that will take years and years to replant and regrow that old pine forest. But that is not where the story ends. It turns out that life giving and nourishing mycelium was growing underneath. It also turns out that aspen was also growing under the surface. Instead of hoping for the past glory of the pine forest, out of the ground sprung forth aspen trees. Imagine the journey, watching a dead forest become an expression of new life, a new reality, and a new way of being.

All of this sounds like the story of our faith: the humility of the cross, the mystery of the grave, and the hope of the resurrection. If we look around, even in the face of death and defeat, we see signs and symbols of new mercies that appear morning by morning. It is my prayer that we will live into the hope of the resurrection at home, in our congregations, on campuses, in our offices, and every place we find ourselves in the world.

In this season of Eastertide, may we be resurrection people, always letting the world know that sometimes what looks like the end is just the beginning.

With resurrection hope,  
ABJ

#FindingMeaning #InsideOut



THE BOARD OF PENSIONS  
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# Season of Rebuilding: A New Benefits Plan to Serve the Changing Church

<https://seasonofrebuilding.pensions.org/>

May 7 10:00 and 2:00 Columbia Theological Seminary, Harrington Center  
May 7 12:00 noon Zoom  
May 8 10:00 and 2:00 Shallowford PC(USA), Heritage Hall  
May 8 12:00 noon Zoom  
May 9 10:00 and 2:00 Mt. Vernon PC(USA), Session Room

Clark Simmons [csimmons@pensions.org](mailto:csimmons@pensions.org) & 215.275.3079



## **COMMITTEE ON PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

### **Admit to Record:**

- The following persons were enrolled as inquirers as of the date shown:
  - a. Ximena Leroux (Central), April 11, 2024
  - b. Laura Jeon (North Avenue), April 11, 2024
  
- The following candidates received a call:
  - a. Morgan Burge (North Avenue), as contract call associate pastor at Roswell Presbyterian Church, Roswell, NC.
  - b. Karen Fletcher (North Decatur), as pastor at Hartwell First Presbyterian Church in Northeast Georgia Presbytery.
  
- The following annual consultations took place:
  - a. Victoria Robinson (Johns Creek), January 11, 2024
  - b. Melva Lowry (Rice Memorial), March 11, 2024
  - c. Dana AbuGhazaleh (Alpharetta), March 15, 2024
  - d. Emily Chapdelaine (née Hicks) (Trinity Atlanta), April 10, 2024

### **For Action:**

1. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommends that the following inquirer be enrolled as candidates as of the date shown:

Dana Abughazaleh (Alpharetta), April 11, 2024

A brief statement of her faith journey is attached.
  
2. The Committee on Preparation for Ministry recommends that the Presbytery endorse Ximena Leroux (inquirer from Central) as a Theological Student Advisory Delegate from Columbia Theological Seminary to the 226th General Assembly (2024).

Since I was a little girl, serving God was always on my heart. I participated in Sunday School, was asked to be a Sunday School teacher assistance at the age of 10 and was finally sent to Cyprus to attend a course called CEF (Child Evangelism Fellowship) when I was 14 years old to officially be a Sunday School teacher at my church at the age of 15.

Although all this was considered groundbreaking and an honor, yet being a woman always limited my ability to participate in the ministry. Back in Jordan, women are not allowed to stand on the pulpit except to sing in a Choir or to provide testimony. Women were, and still are, not allowed to lead worship, preach, or take any part in the Sunday worship service. The best-case scenario for a woman was to lead an all-woman bible study on a weekday where no men are present in the space, and usually this 'honor' was given to the wife of the pastor of the church.

I spent the first 30 years of my life in Jordan struggling with this concept yet having no other option and knowing that this is a reality that I have to accept because 'God said so in the Bible'. When I moved to Dubai with my husband and girls in 2010, my dream of service was put to rest. The limited number of churches that exist in Dubai, the nature of the country, made even being an active member a very challenging thing. Each church 'came' from a different country and the active members were mainly people from that country i.e. the Lebanese Catholic Church, the Egyptian Coptic Church... etc. I reached a point where I felt that whatever that feeling I had inside me was put to rest.

In 2018, when I moved to the US, I remember being overwhelmed with the process of finding a church that was suitable to me and my girls. I remember visiting several churches and leaving them feeling empty or with a sense that I do not belong. I cried for many nights asking God about the reason God moved us to the US! I was frustrated by the restrictions and challenges I faced whenever I wanted to do something. Until, one night, I remember crying myself to sleep while praying to God about my purpose and even future. I do not know what happened that night, but I woke up with a very clear mission and calling which was to join a seminary. I had no idea what my vocation was or what was it I was called to do, nor did I know what would that entail, but I called a friend of mine, Rev. Fahed AbuAkel, who was extremely happy about my calling and introduced me to Columbia Theological Seminary.

God worked in my life in mysterious and miraculous ways, from leading me to Alpharetta Presbyterian Church, to arranging for my Supervised Ministry there. It was during this period of time that I started having clarity regarding my calling. Standing on the pulpit for the first time was a very emotional experience for me, it was very humbling and was accompanied with the first light guiding my way into a clearer picture of what it is that I am called to do. God spoke to me on several occasions through many experiences comforting me that seeking ordination was my path. Although I kept on receiving demotivating messages from people in Jordan telling me that my calling was a dream and unbiblical but God kept on guiding me and opening my eyes to the fact that I am worthy of seeking ordination and that I am worthy of proclaiming God's word.

My CPE experience was the definite confirmation about my calling. It was the way God used me and is still using my humble talents that made me confident that seeking ordination in the PC(USA) is what God has planned for my life. After CPE, I completed my MDiv degree and decided to go for my ThM degree to navigate the other aspect of my calling, the world of

academics. I did not want to stop the work in the church; therefore, I continued to support my church and was given the opportunity to help in leading worship, preaching as well as providing some pastoral care visits. Since I started being more involved in the work of the church and on regular basis, I continued to pray for clarity and guidance. I wanted to make sure that I am being faithful to my calling and doing the work which God called me to do in a way that will be more fruitful and through which God will use me to the best of my capabilities.

In December 2023 I applied for a PhD program at Emory, yet continued to pray that the outcome of this will be God's answer to my prayers, and that the next step, whether it is continuing with both PhD and part-time parish ministry or full-time parish ministry, is where God wants me to be. The wait was tough, and the prayers were continuous, and God continued to work in my life. I was honored with the task of leading a task force which established and launched a new evening causal service at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church and was chosen to be the worship leader for that service. An experience and an honor which challenged me and changed me. It was an experience God used to help me clear my mind.

Sunday March 10<sup>th</sup> was a day I will never forget. It was a day of clarity and further discernment. I was asked to preach on the Gifts of Women Sunday. The Presbyterian Woman guide suggested Proverbs 31:10-31 as the scripture to use. A text that was weaponized against women in general, a text that I have personally struggled with. I prayed for days and days asking God to guide me on how to preach this text. The feedback I received after the services, the number of emails I got from both women and men who attended the service was so affirming and touching to the extent that after sitting alone in prayer after the service, I realized that ministry in the church is what God is calling me to do now. I felt God telling me that this is where I need to be now, and that the PhD will/might happen but at a later stage. Yes, it took three years of wrestling, exploring, learning, and growing for me to figure out the clear next step God has called me to do, but I am so glad that I have reached this stage at this point in time.

# EXAMINATIONS COMMISSION REPORT

April 30, 2024

## For Information:

1. The Examinations Commission reviewed the statement of faith and faith journey of the following ministers of the Word and Sacrament, examined them, and received them into membership on behalf of the Presbytery. They will be introduced during the stated meeting.
  - **Richard Dalton** has been received by transfer from Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery as a retired minister, effective January 11, 2024.
  - **Kari Pellegrino** has been received by transfer from Heartland Presbytery to serve in a validated ministry at Wellstar Health Systems, effective February 15, 2024.
  - **Sue Riggle** has been received by transfer from Utica Presbytery to serve as contract call pastor at Kelley Presbyterian Church, effective February 18, 2024.
  - **Ally Lee** has been received by transfer from San Gabriel Presbytery to serve as interim pastor at Fayette Presbyterian Church, effective April 29, 2024.

Their faith journeys and statements of faith follow this report. Any relevant terms of call are included in the Committee on Ministry Report.

## For Action:

1. **Morgan Burge**, a candidate of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, has been called as contract call associate pastor at Roswell Presbyterian Church, working full time, effective upon ordination. The Examinations Commission has heard a sermon from her and examined her in the areas of Bible, polity, theology, and worship and sacraments. Her faith journey and statement of faith follows this report. The commission recommends that she be approved for ordination, pending her graduation from Columbia Theological Seminary on May 18, 2024.

Effective salary (distribution TBD)	62,500
SECA allowance	4,781
Board of Pensions Pastor's Participation	24,375
Continuing education	1,000
Mileage/auto	1,500
Professional expenses	1,000
Other vouchered expenses	480
First Call Pastors program	400
Four weeks vacation	
Two weeks continuing education	
Twelve weeks paid family medical leave	



## Journey of Faith – Richard Dalton

I was drawn to become a follower of Christ at the age of 32. At that point I discussed my conversion with my pastor (Carmel Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati Ohio). As we talked he wanted me to explore becoming a PCUSA Pastor. I did, and met with the Dean of Johnson C. Smith Seminary in Atlanta Georgia (Dean Costen). Subsequent to meeting with Dean Costen I decided to attend the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC). While attending ITC I was asked to help pastor Georgia Ave. Presbyterian Church with a Southern Baptist Minister (Chad Hale). We were trying to form a community church where everyone was welcomed. We reflected cross culture leadership. I was African American and Chad was White American.

Together we started ministering to the poor and homeless and joined forces with Bob Lupton who was doing housing ministry in Grant Park.

Subsequent to my ministry at Georgia Ave. I took a church in Washington DC. (Garden Memorial Presbyterian Church on Minnesota Ave.). This became a major focus for the rest of my ministry experience.

Garden Memorial was located in one of the worst areas in Washington DC.; Anacostia (Fairlawn). The community was plagued with gangs, drugs and violence. I help lead a fight against the drug dealers with residents and members of my church by setting up Street Patrol Units working in conjunction with Police. The effort became successful, so much so, that the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard (Harvey Simon) did a case study of this community effort for their students (The Orange Hats of Fairlawn (Anacostia). The White House selected this initiative as A Point of Light for the country.

I moved back to Atlanta and started working for Dr. Martin Luther King's organization SCLC and pastoring Salem Presbyterian Church in Lithonia at the same time. Dr. Joseph Lowery, then president of SCLC, appointed me to assist with their National Stop the Killing Campaign based on my work in Washington. At SCLC I wrote a program called Wings of Hope that addressed at-risk families in gang and drug infested communities. This program was selected as the 284th Point of Light by the White House. It was later funded by the Justice Department. At the same time I was pastoring and performing my duties as a Presbyterian Pastor.

At SCLC I met and had the honor to have lunch with Nelson Mandela. I also met and had an opportunity to talk to Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, John Lewis, and other historic civil rights leaders. This was a blessing from God. All I wanted to do after becoming a Presbyterian Pastor was to grow a congregation in following Christ, doing evangelism, and leadership development. God is full of surprises as you know.

Today I am director of a program that trains churches and community groups in low-income violent communities on a 12 month plan to Create A United Front Against Violence in their neighborhood. This is based on my 30 years experience of pastoring and doing national work with the SCLC Stop the Killing Program.

## Statement of Faith

Richard C. Dalton

I believe in God, Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and Creator of all seen and unseen. I believe in His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who lived a sinless life, performed miracles, was/is Savior of world, who shed His blood for the sins of the world. I believe He was crucified, experienced death, buried, and was resurrected the third day from the dead. I believe He ascended into heaven, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father. I believe He will return to earth with all power to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. I believe all who have received Him will also be resurrected from the dead and live eternally with Him. I believe all that don't accept Him will be eternally condemned at the Great White Throne of judgment to be damned forever. I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as the Trinity. I believe in the gifts of the Spirit as mentioned in the bible. I believe that the Holy Bible is God's infallible Word. Jesus is Lord over all aspects of existence and by no other name will people be saved (Acts 4:12).

I was saved (decided to commit my life to Christ) when I was 32. As I was reflecting on my conversion, it was a result of the drawing power and grace of God. During this time I was searching for purpose and meaning in my life and by the Lord's kindness and grace He drew me and radically changed my life. After my conversion (born again) experience, I sensed the Holy Spirit leading me to go to Seminary. I went to Johnson C. Smith Seminary in Atlanta Georgia, completed my Masters of Divinity and became an ordained Presbyterian minister. I served in the Presbyterian denomination for over 25 years and continue to serve wherever the Lord leads me and opens the opportunity.

First and foremost in worship God's people gather, recognizing and acknowledging the presence of God in the proclamation of His Word, praise, and singing all of which points to His glory, love, and power to redeem. This underscores the work of salvation and redemption provided in Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the Church. This worship experience would also include the ministry of the sacraments. Communion (Do this in remembrance of me) points to the blood sacrifice that paid for all our sins, as well, as His broken body (The Bread).

The outcome of this gathering of worship would so impact the lives of those assembled, that their lives are inspired and renewed, So much so, that they are inspired to leave worship with a heart to serve Christ in the world.

I believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and inspired by the Holy Spirit. As such, the Bible is the source of all truth about God, us, sin, and salvation through Christ alone. Inherent in worship and His Word is also His plan for His people "to Glorify Him and spend eternity in His presence with joy and eternal love.

The Sacraments of Baptism, Communion, affirm our union with Jesus. The Way, Truth, and Life.

## **Kari Pellegrino — Faith Journey**

I was raised in rural Upstate New York, where the cows dawdle with peace and the fall colors proclaim the glory of creation. My mother raised me in a blue-collar, non-denominational charismatic congregation. The people of that church embraced one another in a practical love of neighbor. My family frequently relied upon the spiritual, emotional, and physical support of the salt of the earth saints. It was within those spiritual walls that I discovered the personal significance of faith for my resilience, even as my inquisitive nature earned me the label of a “feminist” before I knew to take that as a compliment. My journey was guided by the nurturing presence of my mother, who, amidst life's hardships, enveloped me in love and poetry. Her and other single mothers' resilience underscored the vital role of community in shaping our understanding of meaning and forging a path forward.

My deep affection for scripture propelled me toward Columbia Theological Seminary, where I pursued a Master of Arts in Theological Studies with a focus on the Old Testament. God led me right back to complete a Master of Divinity—a story best exchanged over a cup of good coffee—confronting me with the profound calling to ministry. I was under care of the former Ormewood Park Presbyterian Church. Both Ormewood Park and the former New Worshipping Community, Neighbor’s Abbey, were places where my faith explored and played with amazing people of faith and doubt. My head and heart thrived with both communities they shaped me to be the minister my patients, families, and staff needed. I discovered chaplaincy ministry at this time, but did not yet know it would be the transformative call of my life.

I rejoice in the opportunity serve along the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta community as my family and I return to the area. During my studies at Columbia, I crossed paths with the now Rev. Steven Andrews, my beloved spouse. Our 14 years of marriage have blessed us with Malcolm Andrews (8), Esme Andrews (5), our sweet dog Sparrow, and our sassy cat Cleo.

We are returning to Atlanta after an 11-year chapter in Kansas City, MO, I completed my Clinical Pastoral Education. For a decade, I served as a staff chaplain Saint Luke’s North Hospital in Kansas City, where I fostered deep connections with an exceptional team. Together, we navigated the most challenging moments our community faced, notably during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019 I became board certified by the Association of Professional Chaplains. Beyond direct patient care, I pioneered innovative methods to extend spiritual support throughout the hospital system. These efforts culminated in the establishment of the system-wide tradition of honoring employees with the Hope Award. I also led the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Saint Luke’s Clinical Pastoral Education program.

Mentoring numerous interns and residents during my tenure at Saint Luke’s spurred my ongoing discernment and exploration to continue my Clinical Pastoral Education journey. I have long wanted to steer my focus towards bridging spiritual care with education. This introspection propelled me towards the role of a Clinical Pastoral Education Certified Educator Candidate at Wellstar Health System in Atlanta. I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to learn and contribute within Wellstar's esteemed Clinical Pastoral Education department, enriching the legacy of ministry and education across the Atlanta metropolitan area.

## **Kari Pellegrino Statement of Faith**

God's desire to be known through God's triune relationality has been revealed time and again to creation and to *imago Dei* human beings. God's self-revelation as our Creator comes to us through the inspired, authentic Word, revealed in the Bible. The confessions of the Reformed Tradition illuminate scripture, allowing the Word to shine forth for people of different times and places responding to God's reaching out. I believe God is the Creator and Divine Author of Creation. God is the potency who forms the shapeless void into matter and meaning, and does so with the loving expression of an artist. Through the spoken Word, God joyfully, imaginatively, and lovingly brings the world into existence. The Creator relates to the creation with intimacy and love.

When God creates, the creatures are not static beings. We are not two-dimensional characters. Instead, just like the ever-expanding universe, God formed human beings capable of growth, discovery, maturity, tinkering, learning, grappling, and developing. God endowed creation, both in the general and the particular, with these gifts and many others. Confoundingly this means we participate in sin, both in general and the particular. We inflict and suffer from the consequences of sin--shame, enmity, hatred, intolerance, and cyclical violence --along with the world God made and loves. In this way, we beloved experience captivity to the powers of sin and death and isolation and alienation from God's ongoing loving invitation.

But the Creator did not give up on creation, calling out of humanity a covenant people, making new ways to be in relationship, first and still through Israel and the Jewish people, and then through the Church. I believe God is the Redeemer and Divine Protagonist. God did not watch idly as creation crumbled under the weight of its sin. Out of her steadfast and faithful love for creation, God came down to the world, and took on the joys, temptations, and sorrows of humanity. Jesus was capable of growth, discovery, maturity, tinkering, learning, grappling, and developing. Jesus brings all the capacities of humanity into completion, and shows us a liberating vision of an unbroken human life, without sin. He demonstrates this unity of relationship through table ministry, baptism, healing, parables, forgiveness, and much more, leaving a legacy that his disciples could proclaim to the world. Through Jesus Christ's submission to death on the cross and the story-changing power of his resurrection, Jesus overcame the powers of sin and death, bringing liberation to a captive creation. The work of the Church is to gawk at and live out these mysteries with imperfection and perfect love. For human beings, Jesus' saving grace invites us to the death that births true life. It brings us, not back, but forward to the terrifying, liberative intimate relationship with God which frees us to the restoring relationships with creation and each other.

I believe God is the Sustainer and Divine Storyteller. God brings the story together through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit helps us understand God's story by showing how it unfolds through the beauty of the world, the changing of the seasons—and the rising and falling, dying and resurrecting, of flowers and trees. The Spirit tells us the story of God as it is recorded in Scripture, preached from the pulpit, poured out and fed to us in the Sacraments, witnessed in our Confessions, and grappled with in the hospital room. God dwells among the people as the story continues to be lived out explicitly in the Church, where faith is a gift from the Holy Spirit. God the Spirit is the divine energy that unites what has been divided, and brings down the barriers that have separated creatures from each other and from their Creator. The Holy Spirit breaks the cycles of division, despair, and injustice discomforting people into growth and discovery, unveiling God's ongoing work with this wondrous creation, planted like a seed in the broken soil of our hearts.

I came to faith in Jesus Christ through the gift of God's Holy Spirit, given at the time of my infant baptism at First Presbyterian Church in Burlingame, California. I grew up in a home where the Christian faith was taught and lived by my parents, David, and Dorothy Allison. This faith and way of life had been handed down through multiple generations, producing several Ministers of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church, including two of my four siblings.

As a child and youth, I grew in faith as a member of Geneva Presbyterian Church in Modesto, CA, especially as part of the Youth Group. I helped teach Sunday school, sang in the youth choir, and grew to understand the importance of relationships in my faith community. I fondly remember attending family camp at Zephyr Cove on Lake Tahoe, and summer camp at Calvin Crest.

The foundation of my faith began at home through evening worship and devotions after dinner, followed by our mother sitting at each child's bedside praying the Lord's Prayer. God is someone I came to know, love, and long for. As a student at Hanover College (a Presbyterian school founded by John Finley Crowe, my great, great, great, great grandfather, also a Presbyterian minister), I encountered a broadening of my theology, which furthered my hunger for God. My boyfriend (now spouse) and I taught Sunday school at Hanover Presbyterian Church, the very church where my great grandfather had also been the pastor.

After marriage, Rick and I continued attending church, but due to frequent moves, did not become members anywhere. Our children were 3- and 5-year-olds when we moved to Toledo, OH, where I began working at as a preschool teacher at a neighborhood Presbyterian church. After one year, the associate minister asked me to apply for the job as Children's Minister, but we were due to move again. However, in that invitation, she planted the seed for a vocation in ministry.

In 1993, we settled in Marion, IL where we attended the First Presbyterian Church. I also began work as their secretary. Shortly afterward, the minister moved so for sixteen months, I worked with weekly pulpit supply pastors writing liturgy and planning worship. Soon, I noticed that planted seed of vocation taking root. Working with the encouragement of the new pastor and the congregation, the seed sprouted to see the light of day. I designed and led a thriving, multi-generational Christian education ministry, including a midweek afterschool program. During this time, God was quietly calling to me and after 10 years of excuses, I finally relented to attend seminary.

In June of 2001, we moved to Decatur, GA where I began Greek school at Columbia Theological Seminary. I added a one-year CPE residency at Northside Hospital to my pastoral training so my son could complete four years in one school. We both graduated in 2005.

While waiting for my first call as a Minister of Word and Sacrament, I worked with a private foster care agency for at risk children and teens for two years. In 2007, the First Presbyterian Church of Jonesboro, GA called me to be their next installed pastor, where I joyfully served until 2015, when I accepted the call to serve as Head of Staff at New Hartford Presbyterian Church in New Hartford, NY. After almost eight years of service, I made the difficult decision to leave that call. In 2023, we returned to the Atlanta area where our two grown children and their families live.

2023 was a leap of faith, trusting in the One who called and cares for me, to show me the path forward. It has been a year of healing rest and doing the challenging work of recovering from burn out. I am glad and can confidently say that God is once again calling me to ministry in and through the Church.

As I begin this season of ministry with the saints of Kelley Memorial Presbyterian Church and the community of McDonough, GA, I do so with humility and joy, trusting that God is already doing a new thing within and among us. Thanks be to God. Amen.

I believe in one God in three persons, known as Father, Mother, Creator; God the Son, Redeemer, Lover of my soul; and the Holy Spirit, Sustainer, and Companion. God is the Sovereign Creator of the universe, who by grace sustains and calls creation good. God invites us into covenantal relationship, first carried out through Abraham and finally Jesus Christ, who is the New Covenant.

Because of God's incomprehensible love for us, God entered the world as Emmanuel, a vulnerable child named Jesus, from Nazareth. I trust in Jesus the Christ, as fully human and fully divine. He came to preach the good news, to release the captives, to embrace and heal the brokenhearted, to reconcile all humankind to God's love for eternity. In my life, I strive to follow the ways of Jesus, who spent his life teaching this good news of God's love and forgiveness, modeling for us how to live in loving relationship with God and neighbor. But the world did not receive this as good news. In the end, Jesus was murdered by people threatened by his teachings and power. He suffered and died a painful death. God raised Jesus from the dead, transforming human death from an ending into a glorious new beginning. It is through the forgiveness and grace of Jesus the Christ and God's love that we are fully restored to relationship with God and creation. Scripture says there is nothing in life or in death or in all of creation can ever separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus.

I know and experience God through the gift of the Holy Spirit, who delights and convicts my heart, calling me to enjoy and serve God forever. In the Sacrament of baptism God filled me with the Holy Spirit and gave me the gift of faith, taught to me first by my parents, and affirmed through the church. This same Spirit calls me to remember my baptism with gratitude as a member of the wider family of faith.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit present in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I am strengthened and renewed to celebrate Jesus' life and resurrection each day. Through the Holy Spirit God continues the work of reconciliation, calling people into relationships of love, grace, healing, and service to God, neighbor, and all creation. As a follower of Jesus, I am a co-creator with God and others, working for justice, peace, unity, and good in this world. I am reminded at Table that it is not in my strength or wisdom, but God's equipping that I participate in God's Holy Community's work of love and reconciliation.

I believe the Holy Scriptures to be the inspired, authoritative Word of God. They are lessons of historic love and grace, rules, and guiding principles for living in community, which remain a clarion ring to followers everywhere. Scripture is a recounting of God's faithfulness amidst our rebellion, arrogance, and faithlessness; through it, we are forever called to return to God.

I chose to join others in love and service to God and the world through the Presbyterian Church (USA), a connectional body who proclaims Jesus as Lord and Head of the Church. I seek to be faithful to God, relying on the Holy Spirit, the Word, and lastly my conscience to humbly serve Christ. My call as a Teaching Elder is to preach, teach, administer the sacraments, and offer loving, compassionate care; to be involved responsibly and creatively in equipping the saints who desire to carry out the Great Ends of the Church, and welcoming all who respond in faith to God's grace.

## **Faith Journey – Ally Lee**

My faith journey begins with the faith of my ancestors who served in churches as clergy and lay leaders and passed their faith on to me. My paternal grandmother, in particular, modeled for me a long life of faithful service and prayer. My parents attended a variety of churches when I was growing up. When we moved to Peachtree City, Georgia, I decided to attend First Baptist Peachtree City, and they agreed to attend, as well. I was in sixth grade, and it was the first time I attended church weekly. I had been baptized in a Southern Baptist church at age seven and learned stories from the Bible at church and at home. But regular attendance in worship and youth group began to shape me in more profound ways.

A few years later, at a summer camp, I sensed a call to ministry. Because the Southern Baptist church then and today does not ordain women, I thought that my path was limited to leading children's ministry or mission work. I continued to serve and became a leader in my youth group. I found delight in prayer and studying Scripture. I attended Samford University and pursued opportunities to serve church communities overseas Montreal, Swaziland, Northern Ireland, and Botswana. I completed one year of study at Beeson Divinity School and then transferred to Fuller Theological Seminary, where I planned to integrate the study of theology and psychology for future work in a church context. During my first quarter, I studied with a PC(USA) ordained professor who showed me that I could have a place in the church as an ordained minister. Two years later, after learning more about the PC(USA), I started the ordination process.

During the ordination process, I worked at Knox Presbyterian Church in Pasadena, California. I was ordained to serve as Associate Pastor there in 2017. I led education programs for children and adults and worked with church members to bring a variety of artistic expressions into our worship services. Sensing the movement of the Spirit to develop as a leader, I took on a position with our presbytery in 2020. After two months of work, I found myself learning how to lead both the church and the presbytery through the challenges of the pandemic. I served as Stated Clerk for Administration from 2021 to 2023.

In 2021, I left my call at Knox to take on a new challenge as co-organizing pastor of a New Worshipping community dedicated to racial reconciliation on the west side of our presbytery. I served for one year, helping to train the leadership and to organize the weekly worship service.

In the fall of 2022, I began a season of discernment. I began the search process and had conversations with a number of churches around the country. I wanted to continue to lead conversations about racial reconciliation in the church. I also wanted to take my experiences in the pandemic and walk with a church through the work of visioning for the future. In the midst of the discernment work, my husband and I sensed the need to move back to the Atlanta area to be closer to our parents as they age and for our daughters to have stronger relationships with their grandparents. We moved in July 2023, and I took some time off to prepare to welcome our second daughter and to care for them both over the past six months.

At the suggestion of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta staff, I signed up for the Art of Transitional Ministry Training at the end of August 2023, just a week before I gave birth. I am grateful now for this wise counsel as it has opened the door for me to serve as Interim Pastor for Fayette Presbyterian Church. I am excited to walk alongside this church as they continue in this transitional season. I am grateful for the opportunity to walk with them as they envision their future and prepare to call their next installed pastor. All ministry is surely transitional ministry as we are ever moving and changing in our journeys together. And I am excited to learn from serving a church in this particular season of transition – the interim season.

## **Statement of Faith — Ally Lee**

Our eternal God, the Lord of all and source of life, is three in one: Parent, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Trinity expresses God's essence in relationships and demonstrates God's unity. Our just God is full of mercy and never ceases to be faithful to us.

Out of God's own indescribable beauty, creation was formed and animated. Humans are formed in the image of God and intended to dwell with God. However, our first parents disobeyed. They felt shame and hid from God. We bear in our bodies the hidden wounds of generations of brokenness and separation from God. We stumble about in anger, indifference, and self-aggrandizement. We are imprisoned by systems of injustice and oppression, and we perpetuate these systems. We are unfaithful to God and abuse the image of God in others and in ourselves.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God, our teacher, who was with God in the beginning and who became human. Jesus Christ is fully human and fully God. Jesus took up mortality and knows the human experience intimately. He proclaimed the way of faith. He lifted up those on the outside of society and called us to return to the practices of God's economy: justice, mercy, and peace. Jesus lived a morally perfect life, and yet he was sentenced to death and crucified by state and religious leaders. God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day defeating death, breaking the power of evil, and setting us free.

The Holy Spirit, the breath of God, is the giver of life. The Spirit enlivens us and enables us to turn to God in belief and follow the way of faith taught by Jesus. As those enlivened by the Spirit, God cleanses us and holds us fast in love. We still need to heal from our patterns of selfishness and the systems of brokenness that ensnare us. Our healing is a continual process of transformation.

By the power of the Spirit moving in Jesus' disciples the Church emerged—calling all the nations as adopted children of God's household. We gather to worship God. The Church proclaims the testimony of Scripture, receives the gifts of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and gently maintains the order of its members. The Holy Spirit makes God's grace known to us in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism seals and marks us as the covenant people of God. The washing with water signifies the cleansing and the freshness of our new life. Eating the bread and partaking of the cup of the Lord's Supper reminds us of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and assures us of our reconciliation with God. As we share this meal together, we remember that the people of God have met to share this meal across time and spaces and hope for the day when we will all gather to eat together at Jesus' heavenly table.

Inspired by God, scribes chronicled God's work of establishing a chosen people. That work began with the call of Abram and Sarai through whom God promised to make people. From the time of delivery from bondage in Egypt, through the period of the monarchs, and the time of the exile God demonstrates faithfulness to these promises. God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ is the ultimate demonstration of this steady faithfulness. The Spirit guided the Church to bind together the writings of the Old and New Testaments as one book, authoritative and instructive for knowledge of God and for living as God's people.

There will come a day when Jesus Christ returns to earth. Creation will be renewed. We will be raised in resurrected bodies that will not decay or die to live in unbroken and just community. And we will dwell with God. God's work in our own lives is the first fruit of the final perfection, so we live joyfully and faithfully now even as we are expectantly waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus.



I grew up as an on-and-off multi-denominational churchgoer watching ministers from afar with admiration. However, for much of my life, I did not think there were pathways to pastoral leadership for me as a Black woman because I had not seen it before. As a young child, I felt God's love and care for me, offering me peace in times of chaos and forgiveness in times of misbehavior. I believed and often prayed, but God seemed like a distant, unknowable being. As I grew older, so did my understanding of the sovereign love of God, the redeeming work of Christ, and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

God began feeling closer and more knowable and, simultaneously, more mysterious and vast as I entered my teenage years. Through mentorship in my youth group, conversations with friends, missions trips and community service experiences, and time spent praying and studying Scripture, I grew in my faith significantly. I decided at age 16 to make a total commitment to following Jesus as my Lord and Savior. Following this pivotal time in my faith, I got baptized along with some of my immediate family members. I knew I wanted to continue to grow in spiritual maturity, so I prioritized spending time in Christian community, studying the Bible, seeking mentorship from older believers, volunteering in church, and inviting my friends from school to come to church with me. By the grace of God, I listened to the Holy Spirit's urge to invite one of my best friends to youth group, and she later dedicated her life to Christ! This filled me with hope and began my journey to ministry leadership. From then on, I felt the call to share the love of God with those in my life and actively live out my faith in the world.

As a freshman in college, I joined InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, an interdenominational campus ministry where I grew in my faith and found my voice as a Black female ministry leader. As a student leader in college ministry, I learned that I was passionate about spiritual formation, leadership development, intercultural ministry, prayer, relationship building, and teaching. Ministry made me come alive, but it was still difficult to imagine myself pursuing it vocationally. However, towards the end of college, I prayed that if I said "yes" to Jesus' call to vocational ministry, God would use me to forge paths for others who might also need encouragement in the pursuit of their calls. Upon graduation, I began a nine-year career in college ministry, which gave me abundant opportunities to lean on God's grace, mentor hundreds of students in their faith, and consider a call to ordained ministry.

As a young girl, never in a million years would I have dreamt it possible to end up where I am now. But as I conclude my fourth and final year at Columbia Theological Seminary in the Dual Degree program—Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Practical Theology with a concentration in Pastoral Care and a Certificate in Intercultural Chaplaincy—under care with North Avenue Presbyterian Church, I now see how God has been leading me towards ordained pastoral ministry all along. Throughout seminary, I have considered nonprofit leadership, higher education chaplaincy, hospital chaplaincy, and congregational ministry. Yet through conversations, classes, mentorship, and internships, I have come to believe that serving a congregation as a Minister of Word and Sacrament is what I am designed to do; congregational ministry is where my soul comes alive! I have been extremely blessed by the opportunity to spend four years in deep study and reflection regarding my faith and my call. I now enter this next season in my call as a mother of two daughters who will never have to wonder if there is a place for them as Black girls in pastoral ministry. I am honored and humbled by the call and by the journey, and I look forward to the ways that the Lord will continue to use me to serve the Church, the PC(USA), the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, and my congregation with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love.

I believe in the Trinitarian God—three in one, one in three. I believe in God the Father—our Heavenly Parent, in Jesus Christ—our Savior and Lord—fully human and fully God, and in the Holy Spirit, the “Giver and Renewer of Life” who enables us to follow Jesus (W-1.0105). I believe that God Almighty, through the power of the Holy Spirit, conceived of Jesus Christ through Mary—his human mother who raised him and witnessed his death and resurrection. Jesus, the Son of God, lived a life that reflected the Kingdom of God, suffered, died, was buried, and was raised by the power of the Holy Spirit, conquering sin and death forever. The risen Jesus appeared to hundreds of witnesses before ascending into heaven where he now sits at the right hand of the Father and serves as humanity’s High Priest. Upon his ascension, Jesus gave humanity the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide, comfort, convict, encourage, and intercede for us. The Holy Spirit is God’s indwelling presence with individuals, with the Church, and with the world and brings God’s will into being. Jesus is the Word of God incarnate—God with us—and he will come back to earth to judge the living and the dead on a day that only God knows (Matt. 24:36 NRSV). On that day, the Kingdom of God will fill the earth, bringing the totality of God’s love, justice, and peace on earth as it is in heaven. Those who believe in Jesus receive the gift of eternal life and will be raised with him.

I believe in two Sacraments—the Lord’s Supper and Baptism—which are God’s gift of grace, God’s means of grace, and God’s call to respond to God’s grace (W-3.0409). I believe that the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was given to humanity to remind us of Jesus’ saving work on the cross, to nourish us in the Christian journey, to posture us toward thanksgiving, to signify to us the new covenant, to renew us as a Church, to show us that God cares about our physical needs (such as hunger and thirst), and to encourage us to hope in Christ’s return. The Lord’s Supper is a gift for all who seek to trust in Jesus and is not exclusive to a single denomination. I believe that the Sacrament of Baptism, for infants, children, or adults, does not save us but serves as a reflection of the grace of God, who calls humanity to Godself even before we are able to respond. Baptism is also a commitment from a Christian community to nurture the person being baptized in the Christian faith. Baptism is a sign of welcome into the covenant family of God and serves as a reminder to all baptized Christians of their own baptism. Baptism symbolizes the death and raising of humans with our Savior, the forgiveness of sins, and the renewal of individuals and the Church universal through the power of the Holy Spirit. When we are baptized, we are made one with Christ, with one another, and with the Church of every time and place (W-3.0402).

I believe in the Holy Scriptures, “inspired by God [...] useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16-17 NRSV). I accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, unique, authoritative, living, and active in the lives of individuals and in the Church universal. Christians should place their faith and hope not in the Bible itself but in the God revealed to us in and through the Bible. I believe that the Bible is a living, breathing text that can speak to all people groups throughout all periods of human history. Christians learn from the Bible how to follow Jesus, love our neighbors, live righteous and faithful lives, care for Creation, and work for the reconciliation of the world.

I believe the Church universal is the body of Christ, headed by Jesus. God uses the Church to nurture God’s people and to display God’s grace and love for Creation. The Church is not a building but anywhere Christians gather together. The Church is where God connects believers with one another in fellowship and love and where believers participate in worship together, serve together, and are equipped for and sent on mission together. The Church is not limited to a particular nationality or culture but globally binds believers together as siblings of Christ and children of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Church is the representation of the Kingdom of God on earth. Though imperfect, the Church is being refined by the power of the Holy Spirit until it will be presented “blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:8 NRSV). God empowers, equips, and sends the Church to participate in God’s mission to bring the fullness of the Kingdom of God to earth, promoting the freedom and the flourishing of all God’s Creation.

## **New Church Development Commission (NCDC)**

### **For Information:**

With a commission of 17 Presbytery of Greater Atlanta ministers and ruling elders and a staff of 4 (Executive Director, Corporate Secretary, CPA, and Communications), NCDC continues to catalyze the development of healthy, vital new worshipping communities.

We currently support the development of 35 new worshipping communities who enjoy an average of 6000 people engaging each week.

Recent action items include:

- Election of Jonier Orozco, Pastor of Austell PC, to be NCDC's Moderator.
- With the Fulton County District Attorney's office resolving the case of the organizing pastor of Pulse Church misappropriating his church's assets, the commission has now voted to officially close Pulse Church.
- Completion of NCDC's Financial Review by CPA firm Leggett, Eldridge & Company, LLC. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year NCDC has been deemed compliant with GAAP, internal processes deemed consistent and excellent, and financial statements deemed free of misrepresentations. We are pleased to report that NCDC's financials are consistently given the highest of ratings.
- Approve a 5% pay increase to staff, with the salary increase retroactive to January 1, 2024.
- Welcome "The Story" as an official new worshipping community under the care of the NCDC. The Story was started and is led by the Reverend Dr. Emily Choi, and we look forward to introducing you to this new community at upcoming meetings of the Presbytery.

### **New Worshipping Community Highlight: Soul Soup**

#### **A Word from the Leaders of Soul Soup: Armandee and Chris Drew**

**The Back Story:** Several years ago, we moved to Atlanta, and began the process of meeting neighbors and making new friends. What we quickly discovered is that the people we were becoming community with were people struggling with their faith. Either they had been hurt by the church, were not familiar with church and/or a spiritual side of life or were no longer sure what they believed. Many were young adults entering adulthood; many were also lacking community and missing deep, meaningful relationships. We started meeting weekly around the table in our home. We would gather in the kitchen, make soup together, and talk about our week and other lighter topics. One the soup was ready, we would then move to the table and eat, while talking more deeply about our lives and faith. Rolled into the cloth napkin of two people was a

deeper question for the night. Great work has gone into forming questions that open people up and that they want to engage. These are our two questions for the night. People do not have to speak if they do not wish; yet the questions evoke conversation, reflection, and discovery. Sometimes the conversation centers on scripture and other spiritual readings. Other times it did not. Either way, after the main course of soup and deep conversation, we would then retire to the living room for coffee and maybe dessert. We would then share implications of our table conversation, such as we could imagine it playing out in the upcoming week. When we gathered the next week, we would chop vegetables, set the table, and make soup while catching up with how the previous week went – particularly in relation to what we had discussed and committed to the previous week. The three-fold rhythm intentionally mirrored the three-fold rhythm of worship in the *Book of Common Worship* where we gather, engage the W/word, and then respond as we are sent.

The conversations were deep, prayerful, and soulful. People wanted to bring their friends. The number of people needing Soul Soup in their lives as they deconstructed and reconstructed their faith in safe space multiplied. Over the years, we have been one group. We have also been many groups, staying with the small group dinner format but having many groups at different times and locations. We trained other leaders to lead Soul Soup groups.

Covid gave us the challenge we needed to see our Soul Soup vision bigger and deeper and wider, as so many people were starving for connection and deep meaning. We've tried many different versions of Soul Soup and had many conversations. Certain longings and hunger have stayed with us and others faded. Parts of the early vision are gone, and parts are bright and vivid and energizing. The power of being at table with one another has never left.

**Now:** At its heart, Soul Soup is the desire for wholeness and community. It recognizes that we need others to complete our understanding of ourselves, life, and the divine. It intentionally addresses the heart, mind, and body with the goal of creating health and healing together.

In an effort to know and understand, it is also a safe place to ask and explore the questions that engage cultural norms, sacred texts, and traditions.

And, of course, to enjoy one another, good food, and beauty.

## **THE BIG PICTURE**

Our desire is to pursue authentic truth and love until transformative healing emerges.

## **OUR APPROACH**

Soul Soup Community creates a safe communal table where we can ask deep questions about life, the soul, and the divine.

## **VALUES**

### **RESPECT**

Everyone has a right to their own journey and current perspective.

### **CURIOSITY**

Wanting to learn more about how others understand the world. We create a space that is open, non-judgmental, and safe.

### **LOVE**

We fight for others' highest good.

### **HUMILITY & EQUITY**

Each person's perspective is only part of a greater whole; we need each other. Diversity strengthens us.

### **SELF-AWARENESS**

A desire to explore our inner and outer tendencies and their effect on others.

God has done breath-taking things through Soul Soup, and we are thankful for the chance to share it with you.

## **BILLS & OVERTURES COMMITTEE**

### **For Action:**

1. The Bills & Overtures Committee recommends that the Presbytery approve “An Overture Calling for Action so that Children May Live Free from Gun Violence” (attached below) to the 226th General Assembly (2024) as submitted by the session of Oakhurst Presbyterian Church. Ruling Elder Mary Smarr from Oakhurst is prepared to speak to the overture on behalf of the session.
2. Pending the permission of Presbytery to bring an item that was not included in the original commissioner handbook posted for the meeting, the Bills & Overtures Committee recommends that the Presbytery concur with the second overture below (beginning on p. 52) from the Presbytery of Yukon on directing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts, with the following additional rationale:

While this principle has the potential to be transformative in dealing with the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta also notes that it should be considered for the many other places in the world experiencing war but receiving much less media exposure, such as Sudan and Congo.

The session of Hillside Presbyterian Church has submitted this overture and is preparing someone to speak to the overture on behalf of the session.
3. The Bills & Overtures Committee recommends that the Presbytery direct the Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk to appoint overture advocates to the 226th General Assembly to serve on behalf of the Presbytery on those overtures approved by the Presbytery.

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### **An Overture Calling for Action so that Children May Live Free from Gun Violence**

**The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta overtures the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to:**

**A. Call upon every congregation in the PC(U.S.A.) to take some specific action of love and responsibility for children as part of the movement to prevent gun violence.**

#### **Action Suggestions and Options for Congregations:**

1. **Actively support and pray for** the emotional, spiritual and mental health needs of children as they grow up in an era of school lockdowns, active shooter drills and near-daily news of gun violence.
2. **Promote Secure Gun Storage** - Churches of the PC(U.S.A.) can share information about the **Be SMART for Kids** campaign, which provides strategies and resources to protect children from unintentional firearm injury and death. Congregations are gifted at sharing safety information in their communities, which can include life-saving information on the importance of secure gun storage in every home where there is a gun. Congregations can offer free or low cost gun locks to church members, neighbors and others, and encourage schools to send secure gun storage information home in backpacks for parents.
3. **Encourage Parents and Caregivers to Take Gun Safety Action**- Embolden parents and caretakers to always ask if there is a gun in a home and how it is stored before sending children to play in other homes. Churches can provide parents and caretakers with guidance on how to talk to children and adolescents about what to do if they discover unsecured guns and what to do if they know of a gun that has been brought to school, church or another gathering.

**4. End Gun Marketing to Children** - Congregations can monitor and advocate with their retail stores to stop the “normalization” of firearms that happens in the mind of a child when guns are advertised to appeal directly to children and displayed in stores where children may see them. This includes the need for retailers to refrain from including toy guns in Easter baskets, Christmas displays and other ways that train children to acclimate to the presence of guns, such as the promotion of the youth-sized JR-15.

**5. Promote Gun Security Technology** - Learn about and advocate for wide-spread use of existing technology that allows a gun to be fired only by the owner, preventing unintentional shootings, deterring gun theft and preventing youth and child suicide. Promote the use of biometric locks for secure gun storage, limiting access to the gun owner.

**6. Act for Change** - Demonstrate to children that adults will act to protect them from gun violence: Participate in efforts such as Be SMART for Kids, Guns to Gardens, Violence Interruption Programs; support youth-led gun violence prevention organizations, and gun violence survivors and their families; engage in advocacy with elected officials for gun-sense regulation such as comprehensive background checks, a ban on the future sale of semiautomatic assault weapons and raising the age for gun purchases to 21 or older. Where appropriate, involve children, teens and youth in these efforts.

**7. Vote** - As citizens, parents and grandparents, prayerfully prioritize the lives of America’s children in determining how to cast our individual votes in local, state and national elections.

**B. Additionally, the 226th General Assembly calls upon the PC(USA) Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Decade to End Gun Violence to include secure gun storage and the other safety measures listed here in their ongoing gun violence prevention actions, advocacy and resources.**

## **RATIONALE**

### **Hearing Christ’s Call**

In Luke 18, we see Jesus on the final journey to Jerusalem. Many adults had been besieging Jesus with questions and challenges. Suddenly Jesus is interrupted by parents who are bringing their children, the “little ones” who in first-century Herodian Palestine were overlooked and expendable. The caregivers seek a blessing, a promise of a safe place to belong, to grow free of harm. The disciples who have been following Jesus dismiss these vulnerable ones. Jesus is indignant, but replies with great kindness, “Let them come to me. They know what my Kin-dom looks like.”

As disciples of Christ, we have the same call: to bless all God’s children with a place to belong, to grow, to become strong and filled with wisdom and the grace of God (Luke 2: 40). Continuously since the 1968 General Assembly, the Presbyterian family has called upon our officials to save lives through a reasonable regulation of firearms to keep them away from those who may be a danger to themselves or others. The PCUSA has never called for the restriction of guns typically used in hunting or shooting sports. To these prior actions we add steps that local churches can take to protect children in particular.

### **Acknowledging our Present Reality**

We cannot ignore or dismiss the present reality in the USA: more children are being traumatized, wounded, and killed by guns than by any other danger. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, since 2020 firearms have been the number one cause of death among children and teens in the United States, surpassing even car accidents.<sup>1</sup> From 2017 to 2021, child and teen gun fatalities increased by 40% to 4,739, the largest annual number ever recorded.<sup>2</sup> In addition to those who die, thousands more young people survive shootings each year with injuries that reverberate for months and years, and with ripple effects on parents, siblings and communities.

A recent Harvard study<sup>3</sup> shows that firearm deaths and injuries among youth exert a massive physical toll and mental health burden on survivors and their families. Financial costs are also high, with survivor health spending increasing by \$35,000 in the year following injury. Gun violence inflicts an enormous burden on children and on society, with a disproportionate danger for children of color.<sup>4</sup> When compared to communicable and infectious diseases, gun violence often poses a larger burden on society in terms of potential years of life lost, as well as the long term impact of trauma on individuals, families and communities. These costs are immeasurable and reverberate through generations.

## Recognizing Causes and Solutions

**1. Unsecured Firearms:** The easy access to guns exacerbates the rise in child victims, including gun sales that may not include background checks. There is also an access crisis at the point of gun storage. In America, 4.6 million children live in homes with guns that are both loaded and unlocked, and this number is growing.<sup>5</sup> Secure gun storage saves lives. **Solutions that congregations can participate in:**

**A. The Be SMART for Kids Campaign** has been promoted nationwide and utilized by major hospitals, healthcare systems, the American Academy of Pediatrics, law enforcement agencies and schools. Community partners include national organizations like Injury Free Coalition for Kids, Safe Kids Worldwide, National PTA, as well as numerous other state and local partners.

SMART is an acronym that stands for:

**S:** Secure all guns in your home and vehicles.

**M:** Model responsible behavior around guns.

**A:** Ask about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes.

**R:** Recognize the role of guns in suicide.

**T:** Tell your peers to be SMART.

Congregations can join in monthly BeSMART conference calls and use printable resources that include:

--*Asking about Secure Gun Storage*, with examples of effective conversation-starters.

--*Keeping Your Home Safe with Secure Storage*, which show how gun owners don't need to choose between storing guns securely and maintaining quick access to them if necessary.

--*Secure Storage Toolkit*, a guide to getting secure storage resolutions passed within school districts.

--*Talking to Your Children about Guns*, a guide that includes specific tips for young children, adolescents.

Learn more at <https://besmartforkids.org/>

Additional Secure Storage Resources:

--Order Gun Safety Cards and the Gun Violence Prevention Congregational Toolkit (2024 Edition) from <https://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/congregational-toolkit/> (See Section 3: Action)

--Free cable locks for small firearms can be obtained at most local Veterans Administration facilities.

**B. Normalize the Ask and Talk about Gun Safety:** Child lives can be saved if parents and caregivers will regularly ask friends or neighbors about gun storage in homes where children may visit. Find information on “normalizing the ask” at: <https://www.bradyunited.org/program/end-family-fire/asking-saves-kids> and at [https://besmartforkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Asking-About-Secure-Gun-Storage\\_09.2023.pdf](https://besmartforkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Asking-About-Secure-Gun-Storage_09.2023.pdf)



While it is always an adult's responsibility to prevent unauthorized access to guns and not a curious child's responsibility to avoid guns, we must talk with children about gun safety. Incorporate the conversation about guns regularly, just as you would about other crucial safety issues. Make sure they understand that any situation where there is an unsupervised gun is a dangerous situation. Simple language could include "If you see a gun, don't touch it. Tell an adult right away." Tell children not to touch a gun, even if it looks like a toy. They should always assume a gun is loaded, and they should tell an adult immediately.

We know that talking to children about guns is only a precaution, not a guarantee of safety. One study found that young children who go through a week-long gun safety training are *just as likely* as children with no training to approach or play with a handgun when they find one.<sup>6</sup> The gun lobby is promoting legislation that requires the National Rifle Association's "Eddie the Eagle" program in schools. This program was deemed ineffective by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Alternatively, schools can pass secure storage resolutions, notifying parents of the importance of secure storage. The Be SMART for Kids program provides a toolkit as a guide for this action.

**C. State Legislation:** In addition to supporting a federal secure storage law, congregations can learn about those states that have already adopted laws to hold gun owners accountable for secure storage. States with secure storage laws have lower rates of child gun violence, including child suicide. In these states, the rate of gun suicide among young people ages 10 to 24 was lower in 2022 than in 1999. In states with no secure storage laws, the rate increased 36% during that time.<sup>7</sup> Congregations have access to their state officials and can learn about gun safety legislation in their state at <https://everytownresearch.org/rankings/>

**D. Preventing School Shootings:** In addition to reducing child suicide and unintentional shootings, promoting a culture of secure gun storage can reduce school shootings. The US Secret Service has undertaken studies of targeted school violence, covering nearly 40 years of incidents. They found that 3/4 of school shooters simply took an unsecured firearm from the home of a parent or close relative. The number is even higher with school shooters under the age of 18 taking unsecured guns to commit school shootings.<sup>8</sup> Secure gun storage can help prevent school shootings.

## **2. Gun Industry Marketing to Children:**

The normalization of guns to children by retailers is about money and the gun industry. Advertisements and social media posts often appeal to minors, using cartoonish imagery or referencing video games as a way to capture future customers. Toy guns may be included in Christmas displays and Easter baskets. Real guns may be displayed openly where children can see them. And youth versions of guns are now coming on the market, such as the JR-15, a youth-sized version of the AR-15. Retailers that seek to normalize firearms in the mind of a child are adding to the gun-related trauma that America's children are already living with. **Solutions that congregations can participate in:**

**A. Legislation** has a history of protecting children from being groomed as future consumers, such as banning toy cigarettes and prohibiting pornographic materials from open display. Learn what your state is doing to protect children from gun marketing. For instance, Illinois has passed legislation prohibiting advertising to individuals under 18 that encourages the use of a firearm in an unlawful manner, including advertising that uses cartoons, stuffed animals and clothing targeted towards children.<sup>9</sup>

**B. Social media campaigns** can add pressure to stores that sell guns, especially assault style rifles, where children and youth under the age of 21 can see them. As suggested in the June 2023 issue of *Presbyterian Outlook*, "Take photos of the displays and use social media to let retailers know that you don't want your children exposed to guns while buying household items like clothing or a soccer ball."<sup>10</sup>

**3. Inadequate Approaches to Security:** It may seem that child lives could be saved by simply arming more adults. That is not the intent of this Overture. Putting children in a setting where there are guns entails many risks. Where there are more guns, guns are more likely to be used, whether unintentionally or by escalation of conflict. Most parents, teachers, and members of law enforcement strongly oppose arming teachers. The National Association of School Resource Officers (school police) and a president of the Major Cities Chiefs of Police Association have each indicated their strong opposition to arming teachers.<sup>11</sup>

Instead, we need more preventative and comprehensive ways to create secure communities and schools, including creating a culture where secure gun storage is a new norm, and the most destructive firearms are very difficult to obtain. A study by Everytown, the largest gun violence prevention group in the nation, can help congregations identify ways to enhance security in their own buildings and programs, as well as advocate for these policies with their local school boards. <https://everytownresearch.org/report/how-to-stop-shootings-and-gun-violence-in-schools/>

Resources about security in church settings:

*Whom Shall I Fear?* by Rev. Rosalind Hughes, covers the biblical and practical basis for a nonviolent plan for church security. <https://upperroombooks.com/book/whom-shall-i-fear/?cn-reloaded=1>

*Fear Not*, A Mennonite curriculum to address church security questions: <https://mcc.org/resources/fear-not-creating-plan-respond-active-violence>

Beyond these steps, security is based on the positive development of human beings. Schools and other settings for children will be more secure when every person has better access to dignity and to emotional and mental health support than access to firearms. Congregations can nurture the self-worth of each person as a child of God by supporting anti-bullying programs and other ways to foster healthy growth and relationships. One example of this positive approach to security is the **Choose Love Movement**, created by a parent whose child died in 2012 in the Sandy Hook school shooting. See <https://chooselovemovement.org/>

### **The Local Church: Putting Love into Action**

Babies born the year of the watershed Columbine massacre are now 25 years old. No American youth today knows a world without the threat of sudden deadly gun violence. Yet, we affirm that “Children are a heritage from the Lord” (Psalm 127:3) and that our responsibility as a community of Christian adults is to put our love into action to save the lives of children and youth. With suicide representing 4 out of 10 child and youth gun deaths, we have a God-given calling to give America’s children reasons to live and to thrive, as well as to reduce the access to guns for those who would harm themselves or others.

The local church can be one of God’s great vehicles for healing our nation from gun violence. As one pastor put it a few weeks after a mass shooting at their local grocery store: “Don’t underestimate our role as conveners in the community. Our places and spaces as people of faith are game-changers. People are looking to transform all of this trauma.... We are made for such a time as this.”<sup>12</sup>

For the local church, preventing gun violence is about the sanctity of life. **We know what to do:**

- Have courageous conversations in our churches and communities about the causes of gun violence;
- Support gun sense legislation and vote as if the children’s lives depended on it;
- Securely store our firearms and encourage others to do so, using the BeSMART for Kids Campaign;
- Support the Guns to Gardens movement to reduce the number of unwanted guns, preventing them from being resold, stolen or used in a suicide or other shooting;<sup>13</sup>
- Hold the gun industry accountable for its impact on children and youth;

---Love our children and youth away from fear and into a sense of abundant life and reasons to live.

**Let's do it. Amen.**

Sources:

1 <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/firearms/firearm-research-findings.html>

2 <https://www.childrensdefense.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/SOAC-2023-Tables.pdf> See p. 35

3 <https://hms.harvard.edu/news/health-economic-toll-gun-violence-youth>

and <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2023.00587>

4 Black children and teens in the United States are 5 times more likely than their white peers to die by guns, Centers for Disease Control, Underlying Cause of Death, Four-Year Average: 2018–2021. See also <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/152/3/e2023061296/193711/Trends-and-Disparities-in-Firearm-Deaths-Among?autologincheck=redirected>

5 2021 National Firearms Survey <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8864510/>

6 Marjorie S. Hardy, “Teaching Firearm Safety to Children: Failure of a Program,” *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11943968/>

7 <https://everytownresearch.org/two-decades-of-suicide-prevention-laws-lessons-from-national-leaders-in-gun-safety-policy/>

8 [https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/Protecting\\_Americas\\_Schools.pdf](https://www.secretservice.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/Protecting_Americas_Schools.pdf)

9 <https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.26881.html>

10 *From Despair to Hope: Mobilizing your Church to End Gun Violence*, Rev. Deanna Hollas, *Presbyterian Outlook*, June 2023

11 “NASRO Opposes Arming Teachers,” press release, February 22, 2018, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180223092426/https://nasro.org/news/press-releases/nasro-opposes-arming-teachers/>

12 Rev. Nicole Lamarche, Community United Church of Christ, Boulder, CO, the first local church to host a Guns to Gardens safe surrender event to dismantle unwanted guns and turn them into garden tools.

13 Commended to congregations by the 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, Guns to Gardens information can be found at [www.presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence)

## ***Overture from the Presbytery of Yukon to the 226th General Assembly (2024)***

### ***That the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts***

#### **Recommendation:**

The Presbytery of Yukon overtures the 226th General Assembly (2024) to utilize the Gospel of Love as a guiding principle in its advocacy and humanitarian efforts, particularly in addressing the conflict between Israel and Hamas, with the aim to foster peace, reconciliation, and justice in the region.

The proposition is thus: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) should apply the Gospel of Love (Matthew 22:37-40) to its approach in dealing with this conflict by implementing this three-fold approach to a peaceful solution:

#### **1. Advocate for Peace and Justice**

- Advocate for policies that denounce violence from all sides, drawing from biblical imperatives of justice and peace (Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:21).
- Justification: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9)

#### **2. Implement Humanitarian Action**

- Increase support for humanitarian efforts to provide essential care to those affected by the conflict, reflecting Christ's compassion for the suffering (Matthew 25:35-40).
- Justification: "For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in." (Matthew 25:35)

### **3. Promote Dialogue and Understanding**

- Create platforms for dialogue that includes diverse voices, fostering reconciliation in alignment with the Gospel (Romans 12:18, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19).
- Justification: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18)

#### **Rationale:**

By implementing this three-fold approach, the Church can act as an agent of transformation, using its resources and influence to promote a peaceful resolution to the conflict, thereby witnessing to the power of the Gospel of Love.

The Gospel of Love, as taught by Jesus Christ, calls for active engagement in the lives of others, extending beyond mere sentiment to tangible actions that demonstrate care and concern for the well-being of all. This principle is deeply rooted in Christian Scripture and tradition, encapsulated in the Great Commandment to love God and our neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40). The current rule of engagement in the Israel-Hamas conflict has often been characterized by retaliatory violence and a cyclical nature that perpetuates suffering. A new approach, grounded in unconditional love and non-violent action, is needed to break the cycle of violence, and achieve lasting peace.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a history of global mission work that includes peace-making initiatives. By advocating for policies that promote peace and justice and providing humanitarian aid, the Church can embody the compassion of Christ. The Church's involvement in the conflict, guided by the Gospel of Love, can serve as a testament to the power of love to overcome hostility and build bridges of hope.

The crisis persists due to a lack of widespread, concerted efforts to address the underlying issues with a compassionate, creative, and principled approach informed by the Gospel. If unaddressed, the conflict threatens to continue the cycle of violence, leading to further loss of life, violations of human rights, and impediments to peace.



## Highlights of the April Assembly of the Synod

- Ruling Elder Commissioner, Jacquelyn Rembert of New Harmony Presbytery was elected and installed as synod Moderator-Elect for 2024-2025!
- Concurred with General Assembly OVT-024 On Creating a General Assembly Administrative Commission on Mid Councils.
- Financial Reports, including the 2023 audit, were received, and the 2024 budget was adjusted.
- Learned about grants awarded in 2023.

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A report from the Synod Visioning Task Force report was received and the recommended "Journey Statement and Guiding Values" and new logo were adopted by the Assembly! [Read more here.](#)

### Our Journey

*The Synod of South Atlantic, PC(U.S.A.) **embodies** the grace and love of Jesus Christ, **cultivates** authentic community within and across presbyteries, and **inspires** impactful ministry, developing leaders so that the Church becomes united in faith, hope, love, witness, and service.*

### Guiding Values

**Grace:** We embody Jesus Christ's teachings by making grace the foundation of the Synod's work and interactions with others.

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" - Ephesians 2:8-9*

**Love:** We reflect Christ's love in our lives and work by listening deeply to one another and acting to build up the whole family of God.

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs" - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7*

**Authenticity:** We welcome the full selves of all who gather at our table, respecting one another and seeking to be open with each other, so that our relationships and interactions are sincere and true to the Christian faith.

*"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good" - Romans 12:9*

**Transparency:** We seek to practice openness in the systems and structures of the Synod so that nothing need be hidden from one another.

*"O God, you know my folly; the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you." - Psalm 69:5*

**Unity:** We work to unite the presbyteries and their congregations in faith, hope, love, witness, and service, emphasizing the importance of togetherness and collective purpose within the Synod.

*"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" - Ephesians 4:3*

**Hope:** We welcome the Spirit's presence that keeps us moving forward in hope, becoming the community God intends.

*"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" - Romans 12:12*

**Faithfulness:** In our faithfulness, we reflect a commitment and devotion to seeing tomorrow today and seek to make that desired future real throughout the Synod.

*"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" - Hebrews 11:1*

**Reforming:** As we are open to God's reforming work, we develop presbytery and congregational leaders who share their faith and disciple others, using the patterns of the past to help us discern where God is guiding the church for the future.

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" - Matthew 28:19-20*

Additional Ruling Elders are to be appointed to the Task Force.

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- Two separate overtures from Flint River Presbytery to welcome Lamar Co, Georgia and Russel County, Alabama into their bounds.
  - An Overture On Clarifying the Boundaries within the Synod of South Atlantic was approved to go to the 226<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.





# Do you have a heart for mission?

How can you support our PCUSA mission co-workers?

- Help us maintain our 3 houses and 6 apartments in Decatur, GA.



We are seeking several part-time volunteers to perform:

- [Property maintenance](#)
- [Team management](#)
- [Residence preparation](#)



Join our team of friendly volunteers.

To learn more about these opportunities, contact us:

[missionhavendecatur@gmail.com](mailto:missionhavendecatur@gmail.com)

770-939-5548



*Mission Co-workers participate in community development through clean water, sanitation, integrated agriculture, environmental sustainability, health programs, trauma healing, peacekeeping, and more! They serve at the invitation of partner organizations in places like Niger, South Sudan, Malawi, Madagascar, Zambia, Brazil, Costa Rica, South Korea, and Taiwan.*



*When they return to the U.S. between assignments, we offer fully furnished, affordable housing adjacent to Columbia Theological Seminary. Here, we provide a haven for them to recharge before returning to the mission field.*



## Presbytery Partnership Information

**AMIS** (Atlanta Ministry with International Students) is the French word for “friends” and describes our mission, which is to promote cultural and global understanding through friendship and hospitality with international students and scholars in the greater Atlanta area. We are currently looking for volunteers to welcome and connect with international students as Amigo friends. Our International Friendship program matches an international student with a volunteer in the local community for friendship and sharing of cultures. Your support can help an international student in their adjustment to American life, culture, and language, as well as introduce them to our city. We ask you to meet at least once for a meal, event, or outing and continue your friendship over the year as you have time and opportunity. Learn more at: [amis-inc.org/amigovolunteer](https://amis-inc.org/amigovolunteer) or email us at [office@amis-inc.org](mailto:office@amis-inc.org).

**Buckhead Christian Ministries’** mission is to keep people from becoming homeless and to work to elevate their possibilities for economic empowerment. We provide emergency assistance, supportive housing, and financial education programs that strengthen our community and empower our neighbors. Learn more at: <https://bcmgeorgia.org>

**Central Outreach and Advocacy Center’s** purpose is to open doors to overcome and prevent homelessness. Our vision is to be passionate advocates and invested partners for those experiencing homelessness. Central OAC serves downtown Atlanta from the lower level of Central Presbyterian Church. Our agency has developed from an emergency food pantry to a church outreach ministry into one of the most well-known nonprofits in the downtown area. Learn more at: <https://centraloac.org>

**Earth Covenant Ministry (GIPL)** Georgia Interfaith Power and Light is an interfaith non-profit whose mission is to engage communities of faith in the stewardship of Creation as a direct expression of our faithfulness and as a religious response to global climate change, resource depletion, environmental injustice, pollution, and other disruptions in Creation. Learn more at: <https://gipl.org>

**ECKAM (Evangelical Coalition of Korean American Ministries)** is a partnership of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. It is formed by Korean congregations and fellowships within the bounds of Greater Atlanta Presbytery. ECKAM’s focus shall be mission and ministry that specifically addresses the Korean cultural context and language needs. ECKAM is part of the Presbytery subject to all the policies and procedures of the presbytery and Book of Order, yet will have a certain degree of autonomy in addressing ministry in the Korean context, and in some process issues in the presbytery.

The mission of **Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine and Israel (JHJPI)** is to promote peace with justice in the Holy Land. We promote bringing an end to the Israeli Occupation and exploitation of land and resources by applying Christ’s teaching through prayer, advocacy, and education. Our hope is to build relationships on the basis of equality and human rights so that all may live in peace with dignity.

Join Us! We meet, via Zoom the third Monday of each month at 1:00 pm.

Support Our Work: donate online – [jhjpi.com/support](http://jhjpi.com/support) or send a check to: P.O. Box 2123, Tucker, GA, 30085

Like our Facebook Page: Joining Hands for Justice in Palestine and Israel

Visit Our Website: [www.jhjpi.com](http://www.jhjpi.com) for more information and resource materials.

Or contact: Sarah Humphrey: [sarah.h.humphrey@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.h.humphrey@gmail.com)

### **La Gonave Haiti Partners**

Our Vision: A future where everyone on la Gonâve experiences thriving, abundant life.

Our Mission: Haitian and American partners, working side by side in mutually-transformative relationships, to build vibrant, hopeful, and resilient communities on the island of la Gonâve.

For more than 30 years, la Gonâve Haiti Partners has been working in collaboration with the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti to support programs that build capacity for an improved quality of life for Haitians living on la Gonâve island. Nineteen churches across eight states, individuals, and other institutions partner with our Haitian brothers and sisters to support pre K-12 education for over 1500 students, healthcare for thousands of patients, and economic development opportunities to families through micro finance loans and the Kid-for-a-Kid goat program. Recent initiatives include a new rural middle school that will open this fall, and a computer literacy curriculum for students attending the K-12 school with the arrival of the St. Francis computer lab, and creation of an integrated network of health care providers across the island that addresses maternal and infant health and childhood malnutrition. We welcome new churches to learn more about joining our partnership. Learn more at: [www.lagonavepartners.org](http://www.lagonavepartners.org).

**Memorial Drive Ministries** envisions the end of disconnectedness for refugees and the diverse community of Clarkston. This summer, Memorial Drive Ministries welcomed 3 new partners onto our campus to join our community: a new congregation worshipping in Burmese on Sundays, an International Rescue Committee summer camp for resettled refugee students, and the Center for Victims of Torture external relations staff. As we move into the fall, stay in touch by following Memorial Drive Ministries on Facebook, signing up for our E-newsletter through our website, or giving a gift through our Amazon Wishlist. Learn more at:

<https://www.facebook.com/MemorialDriveMinistries>

<https://mdmatl.org/sign-up-for-newsletter/>

[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1KZ6V7DYWQ4SP?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1KZ6V7DYWQ4SP?ref_=wl_share)

The **Peace and Global Witness Partnership** is established to promote the efficacy of Peace throughout our global community and nation. To effectuate this process of Peace, the Partnership has incorporated several Ministries which range in service population to International Students (Ministry of Amis), The Prison Movement (Ncart), Local homelessness Service projects, El Refugio and detainee programs as well as the Sanctuary Movement located at Columbia Presbyterian Church. In addition, collaborations are underway to integrate the work of Mission Haven with local church ministries. Further, the development of the Institute for Public Theology under the auspices of Columbia Presbyterian Church has begun preliminary discussions with Columbia Seminary in an effort to develop a cross section of curricula designed to enhance public theology praxis with seminary training. Contact Brenda Smith ([joyceel@att.net](mailto:joyceel@att.net)) or Mel Coe ([mcoe@bellsouth.net](mailto:mcoe@bellsouth.net)) for more information.

**Presbyterians Caring for Federal Chaplains** helps the PC(USA) endorsing agency, Presbyterian Federal Chaplaincies ([www.pccmp.org](http://www.pccmp.org)), provide Presbyterian and reformed ministry to federal personnel with the mission, “That all may practice in peace.” We help recruit and support Presbyterian clergy who serve members and families of our Armed Forces worldwide, Veterans and their families receiving care from the Department of Veterans Affairs, inmates confined in Bureau of Prison facilities and their families, and members and cadets of the Civil Air Patrol. In 2023, the Chaplain Training and Credentialing events were held at Calvin Crest Conferences outside Oakhurst, CA on June 26-30 and at Montreat Conference Center in Montreat NC on August 7-11. Minister members of this Presbytery currently serving as Federal Chaplains are Patrick Day with the Georgia National Guard (to be deployed January 2023) and Michael Chaney in the US Navy. ALSO, we encourage congregations to become a “Veteran/Military Friendly Congregation,” a program of the Military Chaplains Association (<https://mca-usa.org>). For more information contact Rev. Bill Nisbet, retired Army Reserve Chaplain at [wonisbet@bellsouth.net](mailto:wonisbet@bellsouth.net). Contributions from individuals or churches to support our Presbyterian Federal Chaplains can be made through the website above.

**Presbyterians for a Better Georgia** has been a voice for Presbyterians at the state capitol during legislative sessions, working especially hard to achieve positive results on our two focus issues: 1) increasing affordable housing/ending homelessness and 2) increasing access to healthcare. Please visit our website ([www.p4bg.org](http://www.p4bg.org)) or our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter feeds to learn more about how you can partner with PBG.

**Presbyterian Youth Ministry Collaboration of Atlanta** brings together those working in youth ministry across the greater Atlanta area. Our group is composed of full-time, part-time and volunteer youth workers who serve in a variety of ordained and non-ordained positions at PGA churches. The mission of this partnership is to foster community and learning between the youth workers of the presbytery through idea sharing. For more information or to receive the email updates from the PYMCoA partnership please contact Rev. Jennie Sankey, [jennie@pleasanthillpc.org](mailto:jennie@pleasanthillpc.org) or Rev. Tully Fletcher [tully.fletcher@gmail.com](mailto:tully.fletcher@gmail.com)

**Street Grace** is a faith-driven organization collaborating with faith, business and community leaders providing a comprehensive path to end the sexual exploitation of minors. CSEC involves the recruitment, harboring, transportation, and/or the obtaining of a child under the age of 18 for the purpose of a commercial sex act. Street Grace mobilizes community resources – financial, human, and material – to fight CSEC through **prevention, protection, policy and pursuit**.  
MISSION: To eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).  
VISION: A world where all children are free from sexual exploitation.  
Learn more at: <https://www.streetgrace.org/>

The mission of **UKirk Atlanta** is to energize, coordinate, and develop relationship-based ministries on Atlanta area college campuses and to build connections between college students and PC(USA) congregations. UKirk Atlanta strives to foster supportive, faithful communities of students who together seek to engage faith in their everyday lives, particularly for the students at Agnes Scott College, Emory University, and Georgia State University. We are proudly a member of More Light Presbyterians and a Matthew 25 Faith Community. Our

partnership as a More Light ministry gives us a foundation for the future of our ministry that we are proud to stand upon so that we can “be lovingly present for those who most need support in our communities, encouraging us to better attend to their spiritual needs.”

We are also called by our faith to stand against the systems of white supremacy and racism, seeking justice and wholeness in God’s beloved community. Learn more at:

[www.ukirkatlanta.com](http://www.ukirkatlanta.com)

**Westminster Christian Fellowship at Georgia Tech** introduces students and Chinese scholars to Christianity and walks with Christians through this pivotal time of life. Our general student group meets weekly for fellowship, worship, prayer, and small group Bible studies. Our Chinese student group meets weekly to build community and study the Bible. Every year we serve over 300 Chinese students in August by welcoming them to Georgia Tech by offering transportation and temporary housing before the school year begins. We also have a weekly group for Chinese adult scholars and their families to learn about Christianity. The scholars group provide many adults with their first exposure to Christianity.

If you would like more information about our organization, you can visit our website ([www.gt-wcf.org](http://www.gt-wcf.org)) or find us on Facebook or Instagram ([gtwcf](https://www.instagram.com/gtwcf)). If you are interested in volunteering or becoming a financial supporter, you may email our director Jon Keyser ([jon@gt-wcf.org](mailto:jon@gt-wcf.org)).

## Opportunities for Presbytery Service

*Committees and Commissions of the Presbytery need you! If interested and able, please submit a Volunteer Interest Form found with full committees/commission job descriptions at <https://www.atlpcusa.org/committees>. Terms are typically 3 years with eligibility for re-election for a second term (max. of 6 yrs). The \* indicates that members must be Ruling Elders or Teaching Elders in the PC(USA) to serve.*

**\*Bills and Overtures Committee/General Assembly (GA) Commissioner** – prepares for, attends, and participates in the General Assembly and report to the Presbytery. Serves as the Presbytery Bills and Overtures Committee for two years following the General Assembly.

**\*Committee on Ministry (COM)** – provides care of congregations, pastors, and educators. Typically meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays – 5-7 PM – Subcommittees (Care of Churches Team, Transitions Team) meet 4-5 PM – Zoom.

**\*Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)** – works with inquirers and candidates as they discern calls to ministry and move through the requirements for ordination. Typically meet 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays – 4:30-7:30 PM – Alternating between Morningside PC and Zoom.

**Committee on Representation (COR)** – offers ways to live out the church’s commitment to inclusiveness and representation. Typically meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday every other month – 10-11:30 AM – Zoom.

**\*Presbytery Council** – guides, plans, and envisions staffing needs and directions to be taken by the Presbytery. Typically meet 5-6 times per year – Monday – 5-7 PM – Zoom.

**\*Examinations Commission** – examines all ministers who wish to be received into the Presbytery for membership. Typically meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays – 1-4 PM – Zoom.

**Grants Committee** – awards three primary grants each year to churches or other organizations. Also considers awards for seminarians. Typically meet first Tuesdays twice per year (May and October) – 10:30-11:30 AM – Zoom.

**\*New Church Development Commission (NCDC)** – catalyzes and supports the development of fresh expressions of church throughout our presbytery. Typically meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays 6 times per year – 5-7 PM – Zoom (with 1-2 in person gatherings).

**\*Nominating Committee** – identifies and recruits potential volunteers for Presbytery committees/commissions. Typically meet Thursdays 4-6 times per year – 10-noon – Zoom (with some in person gatherings).

**Operations Committee** – manages financial and business processes of the Presbytery. Typically meet one week prior to Council – 2:30-4:30 PM – Zoom.

**\*Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC)** – exercises church discipline through judicial process. Typically meet as necessary during one term of 6 years.

**Personnel Committee** – provides guidance, expertise, and assistance to the Presbytery staff regarding matters of personnel. Typically meet 1<sup>st</sup> Mondays, quarterly – 12-1:30 PM – Zoom.

**Racial Healing Committee** – looks at ways congregations may be more engaged in education and action around racism. Typically meet 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays – 5-6:30 PM – Zoom.

**\*Synod Commissioners** – represent the Presbytery at 1-2 Synod meetings each year of a 4-year term.

**Presbytery Worship and Planning Committee** – assists in planning worship and the order of business for stated Presbytery meetings. Typically meet 5-6 times per year at host churches or via Zoom.

VOLUNTEER INTEREST FORM  
Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

Use this form to express interest in volunteering to serve on a Presbytery of Greater Atlanta committee/commission. The information you submit will be put on file for the Nominating Committee. The primary nominating meeting is in the fall. However, there may be a few vacancies to fill throughout the year.

The PGA is committed to giving full expression to the rich diversity of our membership in the structures of our committees/commissions and council. Providing information helps the Nominating Committee fulfill this commitment to inclusiveness and representation.

Please complete the questions below as you feel comfortable. Submitting a form does not guarantee nomination. If you are nominated, you will be contacted by a member of the Nominating Committee. If not nominated, your information will be kept for the next cycle.

Committee/Commission Info: <https://www.atlpcusa.org/committees>

Mail To: Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, 1024 Ponce de Leon Ave NE, Atlanta, GA 30306

To fill out this form online, visit <http://bit.ly/2xMq8bm> or Scan →



\_\_\_\_\_  
Today's Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred Method of Communication

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code

I am a:

\_\_\_\_ Ruling Elder (Once a Ruling Elder, always a Ruling Elder!)

\_\_\_\_ Teaching Elder

\_\_\_\_ Lay Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church of Affiliation and City (Ex. First Presbyterian in Covington)

If Teaching Elder, are you:

\_\_\_\_ Validated Minister Member

\_\_\_\_ Honorably Retired

\_\_\_\_ Member At Large

\_\_\_\_ Parish Pastor

--Turn Over--

Thank you for your interest in serving.

I am interested in serving on the following committees/commissions:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Assembly Commission/Bills<br>& Overtures Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> New Church Development<br>Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee on Ministry                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating Committee                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee on Preparation for<br>Ministry                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations Committee                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee on Representation                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Judicial Commission        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council  | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Committee                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dismantling Racism Committee                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Synod Commission                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Examinations Commission                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship and Planning Committee       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grants Committee   | <input type="checkbox"/> Where Needed                         |

I offer the following gifts/qualities/skills to a committee/commission: (*Examples: Financial Planning, Multilingual, Funds Development, Bookkeeping, Musician, Liturgist, Listener, etc.*)

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In the Presbytery, I have served in the following ways (any presbytery):

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Age:

- |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 and Under | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-55   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26-35        | <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 36-45        | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65 |

Gender Identity: \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural/ Ethnic Heritage: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

What else would you like us to know about you that would be helpful?

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--Turn Over--

Thank you for your interest in serving.